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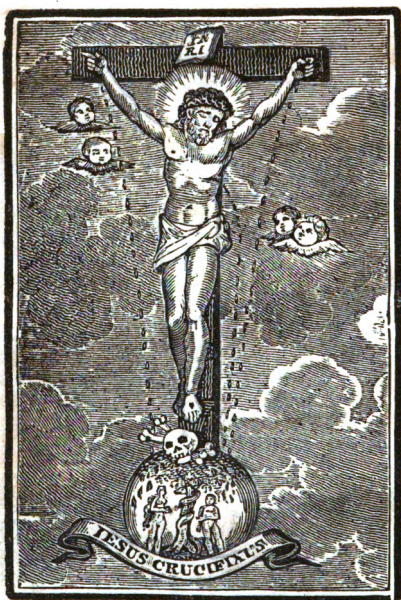
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Consummatum est !

JOHN xix. 30.



MEDITATIONS
ON
THE PASSION
OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,
IN THE WAY OF
FAMILIAR COLLOQUIES,
FOR
EVERY DAY IN THE MONTH.

Written in French
BY M. COURBON, D. D.
And translated into English
BY THE REV. HENRY RUTTER.

THIRD EDITION, CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

If thou knowest not how to meditate on high and heavenly things, rest on the Passion of Christ, and willingly dwell in his sacred wounds.—*Following of Christ.*

DUBLIN :
PRINTED BY RICHARD GRACE AND SON,
45, CAPEL STREET.

1833,

1606/1656.



PREFACE.

As the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ is the source of all mercy, grace, and salvation, every Christian may justly consider it as one of the principal objects of his devotion. *God forbid*, says St. Paul, *that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world*, Gal. vi. 14. *I judged not myself to know any thing among you, but Jesus Christ and him crucified*, 1 Cor. ii. 2. In effect, the passion of Christ is that mysterious book which the eternal Father presents to us, in order that we may there read and understand something of the greatness of his love, and may acquire the most important of all sciences, the science of salvation. This divine book was first opened to us on the cross; it was there exposed to the view of mankind, teaching lessons of every virtue, and prescribing remedies against every vice. At our baptism this book was opened to us individually; its divine characters were then imprinted on our souls, and formed in us a resemblance with Christ crucified, before we were capable of reading them; at the day of Judgment this book will be reproduced, and, according to its unerring maxims, our lot will be decided for eternity. The sovereign judge will rigorously examine how far our lives have been conformable to that of Christ crucified, and what use we have made of his sacred doctrine and holy example. Who can express the deplorable condition of sinners on that day, when, instead of being faithful copies

of this divine original, they shall, in direct opposition to it, be found to have followed only the world, the flesh, and the devil? What excuse can they alledge for rejecting this divine book, which all are strictly obliged to read,—a book which is adapted to every capacity, and from which every person may learn the way of salvation. Here the wisest may obtain new light, and the most advanced in a spiritual life may find new paths that lead to perfection: the strong here discover their weakness, and the weak are animated with new courage and strength; even the most simple may learn wisdom, and, though ignorant of human sciences, may, in the science of salvation, be enabled to equal, perhaps to surpass, such as are gifted with the most brilliant talents.

As an additional recommendation to the serious meditation of Christ's Passion, let it be remembered that this book not only illumines the understanding; it moreover warms the heart, and strengthens the will to practice the saving doctrines here taught. A heart possessed of the least sensibility must necessarily feel itself moved with so melting a subject, and, like soft wax before the fire, will become capable of receiving every impression of divine love. To a heart that daily meditates on the Passion, Jesus becomes as a glowing furnace, which insensibly softens its hardness, and renders it susceptible of the tenderest sentiments of love, and of the choicest effusions of his grace. This truth we find exemplified in the lives of the saints; who were, therefore, particularly devoted to the Passion of Christ, from the conviction that such devotion was equally pleasing to their Redeemer, and beneficial to their own souls. An easy method of performing this devotion will be found in the following treatise, which contains meditations for every day in the month. To such as have not been

accustomed to meditation, this exercise may at first appear difficult : we shall, therefore, by way of introduction, first state the principal reasons which ought to induce Christians to meditate on the Passion of Christ ; and, in the second place, we shall give such admonitions as may facilitate the practice of this holy exercise. The pious reader, it is hoped, will attend more to the solid truths here delivered, than to the plain, unadorned language in which they are expressed : let him add also his fervent prayer for the success of a work, the sole object of which is to unite Christians so perfectly to Jesus Christ, *crucified* on earth, that they may one day be for ever united to Jesus Christ, *glorified* in heaven.



APPROBATION.

The pleasure and satisfaction which I have derived from the perusal of these *Meditations on the Passion of our Lord*, induce me to believe they will prove equally acceptable to other readers. They who have long consecrated themselves to Jesus Christ crucified, will here find powerful motives to confirm them in this devotion, and to animate them in the practice of the most solid virtues. Even such as appear the most hardened and insensible, will experience therein a certain sweetness to which they have been strangers, in a way hitherto unknown to them. The present work contains nothing but what is perfectly conformable both to faith and good morals. Given at Paris, the 23rd of January, 1680.

S. BORNAT, Dr. of Sorbonne.



MEDITATIONS, &c.

THE ADVANTAGES

Of daily Meditation on the Passion of Christ.

FIRST ADVANTAGE.

The daily remembrance of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ is a most efficacious means to withdraw us from sin.

IN effect, nothing proves more forcibly the enormity of sin, its extreme malice, and the consequent punishment it deserves, than the consideration of what God has suffered for its atonement. Nothing tends more to inspire us with a contempt for the honors and vanities of the world, than the profound humiliations of Jesus Christ crucified. Nothing is more capable of diminishing our love and attachment to the false pleasures of this life, than the consideration of the unparalleled sufferings of our dear Lord endured for us in his passion. In a word, nothing gives us a more exalted idea of grace, of sanctity, and of the eternal happiness of heaven, than the consideration of the high price which Jesus paid for these favors : a price which cost him the effusion of his blood, the loss of his precious life. These different motives have a

powerful effect to disengage us from vice, to take off our affections from creatures, and to attach us to God; in which particulars a true conversion chiefly consists. Such are the happy effects of daily contemplating Christ's passion and death. By this holy exercise, the sinner daily elevates himself to the cross of Jesus, to seek in his blood the remedy of his crimes; he is insensibly alienated from whatever displeases God; and in following the example of this divine model, he meets with a safe guide, that will conduct him, as it were by the hand, to the kingdom of heaven. For it is principally on Mount Calvary that we experience Jesus to be the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*; the *way* that withdraws the sinner from his evil courses; the *truth* which enlightens his darkness; and the *life* which animates and enables him to run on with courage and alacrity in the delightful paths of virtue.

SECOND ADVANTAGE.

The daily remembrance of Christ's Passion is a most salutary means to prevent us from relapsing into our past disorders.

"NOTHING," says St. Austin, "is so profitable, as to think how much Jesus hath suffered for us—He, who is both God and man." (Serm. 52.) The same saint assures us, that in all his necessities he found no remedy so efficacious as that which is derived from the wounds of Jesus Christ. *In omnibus non inveni tam efficax remedium, quam vulnera Christi.* In effect, if Jesus Christ on the cross be as a divine loadstone, ca-

pable of attracting the most obdurate hearts ; he is not less an invincible rampart, which we may oppose against all the attacks of our spiritual enemies. How is it possible, daily, to acknowledge sin as the fatal cause of all the torments which our divine Saviour endured, without conceiving an utter detestation of it ? In beholding Jesus in the midst of his torments and of his bloody sweat, we behold sin written in characters of blood, since it is sin alone which forces blood from every pore of his sacred body.

THIRD ADVANTAGE.

The daily remembrance of Christ's Passion is an excellent means to make great progress in the way of virtue.

If solid perfection consists in overcoming sin ; in purifying ourselves more and more from the *defilements of the flesh and of the spirit* ; in divesting ourselves of self-love, to make room for the love of Jesus Christ ; the great secret of making a rapid progress in so important a work, must be, to go daily in spirit to Mount Calvary, there to purify our souls in the blood of Jesus, and, from this sacred spring, to draw the salutary waters of eternal life. In confirmation of this truth, we may observe, that the apostle compares Christians to *wild olives*, ingrafted on Jesus Christ, with an obligation of bearing fruit conformable to this divine tree. "*For if we have been planted together, after the similitude of his death, in like manner shall we be of his resurrection,*" (Rom. vi. 5.) To be associated with Jesus Christ in his glorified state, we must first be

united to him in his state of crucifixion ; since to be delivered from the servitude of sin, it is necessary that our old man should be crucified with Jesus: *knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed*, (Rom. vi. 5.) and that, if we would live with him, we must first die with him to all things ; *for if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall live also together with Christ*, (ibid). Hence we may learn that it is properly on the cross we are ingrafted in Jesus Christ, and consequently that the fruits we are to bear, ought to be fruits of the cross. To this mysterious tree we must unite ourselves, in order to receive of its sap, that is, to partake of that grace which our Saviour has there merited for us, and which is necessary for the spiritual life of our souls ; lest otherwise we become as useless branches, separated from the stock, and fit only to be cast into the fire. The daily remembrance of our Saviour's passion must be an excellent means to bring us to this holy union with him, and to a participation of his divine communications, as it tends to introduce us into his adorable heart, and to keep us inseparably attached to his love and service.

FOURTH ADVANTAGE.

To reflect on the sacred Passion of Jesus Christ, is an exercise extremely agreeable to him.

To be convinced of this, we need only advert to the repeated apparitions and extraordinary graces with which those have been favored, who were distinguished for this devotion. These favors

are to be considered as so many testimonies of Christ himself in behalf of this holy exercise; and, as they may easily be seen in the pious books which treat of the passion of Christ, I shall content myself with one more proof, which is equally conclusive, and not less adapted to the understanding of all Christians. This is drawn from the *blessed sacrament*, which, you know, is a memorial of Christ's sacred passion, and which he instituted with this particular view, that it might excite us often to think of his sufferings. *Do this*, said he to his apostles, *in remembrance of me; for as often as you eat this bread, and drink this chalice, you shall shew the death of the Lord until he come*, (1 Cor. xi. 26.) Surely the daily recollection of the passion of our Lord must be an exercise highly agreeable to him, since he has left us so great a memorial of it. But can we doubt of this truth, when we consider what daily passes before our eyes? How gratifying is it to a friend, to observe that we retain in our minds a grateful remembrance of him and of his favors, and that we are ever ready to correspond with the obligations we have received! In like manner our Lord Jesus Christ, the greatest and best of friends, who for our sake did not hesitate to lay down his very life, cannot fail of being pleased, when he sees that we daily consecrate some portion of our time to the contemplation of his sufferings, and retain a grateful sense of the infinite benefits derived to us from his passion.

FIFTH ADVANTAGE.

The daily remembrance of Christ's Passion is attended with great comfort to ourselves.

THE generality of Christians who enter on this holy exercise, are apt to deceive themselves with an erroneous and unfavorable idea which they form of this devotion. Hence, though convinced of its utility, they still undertake it with a degree of reluctance. They represent to themselves the meditation of our Lord's sufferings as a constant source of gloomy and melancholy reflections, which tend to undermine the peace and satisfaction of their minds; they imagine that we cannot often reflect on the sorrows of our divine Master, without feeling emotions of painful sensibility from their extreme bitterness. But, admitting this to be the case, is it too much for us to suffer, for one quarter of an hour in the day, the sorrow arising from a view of Christ's sufferings, when, for our sake, he refused not to endure the full weight of them in body and soul, during the whole course of his life? But if it be true, that the contemplation of so moving a subject humbles us in prosperity, and troubles us in the midst of our sensual pleasures and false enjoyments; it is no less true, that it never interrupts the inward peace of our hearts; since this is much better relished amid the tears we shed for our suffering Jesus, than in the midst of those fatal and attractive charms which intoxicate the admirers of the world. Besides, should we, by a special grace of God, be penetrated with the

passion of our amiable Saviour, so as to become insensible to worldly delights, we may rest assured, that the privation of these false joys will be abundantly recompensed ; not only in heaven, but also in this world, by the sweet consolations which he will infuse into our souls. Nay, under the heaviest afflictions, maladies, and all the other evils of this life, we shall often experience a real comfort and satisfaction, whilst worldlings, who seek only self-gratification and pleasure, are disquieted by every cross, and overwhelmed by every disappointment. Thus, to the servants of Christ crucified, is literally fulfilled that sacred promise of their divine Master, “ *Your sorrow shall be turned into joy,*” (John xvi.) In effect, in proportion as we become more sensible to the sufferings of Christ, we become less sensible to our own ; for, in that case, we live more in him than in ourselves, as the apostle testifies, (*Gal. ii.*) But let it be observed, that experience alone can convince us of this great truth, and render it, as it were, palpable, and beyond contradiction. Nor are we to expect this feeling conviction, unless we faithfully, and for a considerable time, employ ourselves in this holy exercise ; for, in general, God grants this sort of grace to those only who labor in good earnest, and who serve him with perseverance. We may add, that this practice will afford great consolation at the hour of death, to such as daily prepare themselves for it, by meditating on the death and passion of their Redeemer ; for he alone can render that terrible moment favorable to us, and precious in his sight.

SIXTH ADVANTAGE.

The practice of daily meditating on the Passion of our Lord, is easy to all persons, provided they be duly instructed in the method of performing this devotion.

IT is a common temptation to such as begin seriously to labor for salvation, to imagine the way of virtue much more difficult than it really is. This is a stratagem of the devil, to induce Christians to abandon their pious undertakings, and it too frequently succeeds : for he represents virtue and religion in a dress so austere and frightful, that it is difficult for them not to take the alarm, unless they have sufficient penetration to discover the artifice, and sufficient wisdom and resolution to try how very sweet is the yoke of the Lord. As the chief reason which prevents many Christians from reaping the happy fruits of this devotion, is owing to an erroneous idea which they have formed of its difficulty ; they are requested, even as a favor, and for the sake of their own salvation, not to decide hastily on this exercise, but to give it at least one month's impartial trial. Let them first *taste* and *see*, before they judge ; and, provided they faithfully observe the following admonitions, they will, I am convinced, soon learn to entertain a favorable opinion of this practice, which is no less easy than consoling to all such as are willing, for the love of Jesus, to submit to the least restraint.

From the above considerations you may clearly infer the utility of daily meditating on the passion of Christ. If then, dear reader, you

feel convinced, that this holy exercise is calculated to withdraw you from sin ; to prevent your relapse ; to promote your advancement in virtue ; to render you agreeable to Jesus Christ ; and to fill your heart with solid consolation ; you are earnestly desired, after reading attentively the following admonitions, cheerfully to undertake the practice of this devotion ; considering it as an excellent specific, which divine Providence presents to you, for securing more effectually your eternal salvation.



DIRECTIONS

For the Daily Practice of Meditation on the Passion of Christ.

FIRST DIRECTION.

ALTHOUGH the practice of daily meditation on the passion of Christ be an approved devotion, adapted to all Christians, yet, with respect to some, it is peculiarly useful and necessary. Such Christians as have never been accustomed to meditation, and yet have a sincere desire of giving themselves to God, will derive from this exercise particular advantages. Persons of this description, being unacquainted with the method of mental prayer, are generally averse to undertake any new devotion, unless they immediately experience a certain relish or pleasure which attracts them. That the devotion here recommended is of this attractive and agreeable nature, will be found by those who give it a fair trial: they will also be insensibly induced to adopt such practices as God designs for their progressive improvement in virtue. For the use and benefit of such persons this little work was principally designed. Its practice is compatible with every state and condition of life; there being none who may not, during the day, find a quarter of an hour for honoring the sufferings of our Lord. If they have not the disposal even of so small a part of their time, they may still perform this devotion, in the midst of their daily employments. Those who are al-

ready advanced in the practice of virtue and meditation, may also adopt the method here recommended ; or they may, at least, exhort others to it, if they do not choose to practise it themselves : for possibly they may be already engaged in a variety of pious exercises, which it is not always proper to abandon ; or divine providence may conduct them by other particular ways more suitable to their circumstances and dispositions. As to those persons who blame every thing which themselves do not relish and practise, they have too much reason to suspect their devotion and censorious turn of mind, since the ways of God, however different in themselves, are never opposite and contradictory to each other. This practice will be found equally advantageous to persons engaged in a habit of sin ; who, on this account, are earnestly exhorted to make use of the following meditations ; especially at such times, when they are more than ordinarily disposed to listen to the reproaches of conscience, and to attend to the important affair of salvation.

SECOND DIRECTION.

In these meditations we have not followed the method usually observed by others ; because it was conceived that a colloquy, or familiar conversation, between Jesus Christ suffering, and the soul adoring and consulting him would be more pathetic to soften the heart, and render it susceptible of the impressions of divine grace.

THIRD DIRECTION.

Some persons may, perhaps, object that these colloquies are too long for a quarter of an hour, the only portion of time supposed to be allotted for them ; but as they are to be repeated every month, such repetition might prove tedious, did they barely contain matter of meditation for one single quarter. With a view to obviate this inconvenience, we have inserted in the colloquies a considerable variety of different sentiments, which may furnish new affections to the soul, every time she applies to meditation. It is not therefore necessary, nor even proper, to go at once through all the several considerations here put down ; it is better to dwell on the first that arrests your attention, and seems most likely to make an impression on your heart.

FOURTH DIRECTION.

If you feel disposed to adopt the practice of daily meditation on the passion of our Lord, you ought previously, for some days beforehand, to beg God's grace to second your intentions ; it will be proper also to perform some good works by way of preparation for such an undertaking. You must afterwards make a firm resolution to employ, every day, in this holy exercise, a quarter of an hour. Without such a resolution, you might possibly be disgusted, either by the temptation of the devil, the sworn enemy of all that is good, or by the natural levity of human nature, which is ever averse to

restraint ; but from whatever quarter the temptation arise, generously resolve to overcome it ; fully persuaded that it is more advantageous to be the servant of Jesus Christ, than the monarch of the universe. Such were the sentiments of St. Paul and the other apostles, when they preferred the quality of *Servants of Christ* to all other titles.

FIFTH DIRECTION.

At the beginning of prayer, remember that you are before God ; next, figure to yourself Christ, in the state in which he is represented by each day's meditation ; and after adoring him, and humbling yourself, from the consideration of your manifold sins, fervently beg his grace for the due performance of this holy action. Then read a reflection, and dwell on it according to the impression it makes ; proceed, in order, to the other considerations, in such manner as to pause longer in the second part than the first, and still longer in the third than in the second. The reason is, that in the third part we must form good resolutions, in which the principal fruit of all prayer consists.

SIXTH DIRECTION.

It must be observed, that these *reflections* and *sentiments* are to be considered only as *seeds* which are sown in our hearts, in order to take root, to grow up, and afterwards to bring forth fruit in due season, as the prophet expresses it. It may therefore, very possibly happen, that

the soul does not, at first, speak *interiorly* to Jesus Christ, and to herself, exactly according to the book : in that case, it is sufficient to desire to have these sentiments ; to humble ourselves, seeing that we have them not ; and earnestly to beg them of God.

The *resolutions* are also to be considered in the same light : we are not to form them merely because the book prescribes them, but should rather examine whether we have a sincere will to execute them. If we do not discover in ourselves sufficient courage to reduce them to practice, we should frequently conjure our Lord to give us such courage ; and, at the same time, endeavor, with the assistance of his grace, to acquire this excellent disposition of mind.

SEVENTH DIRECTION.

It is advisable not to confine yourself to the reflections here inserted, when other thoughts occur on the same subject ; especially if these thoughts immediately regard yourself. In fact, when your mind is fully occupied with the sole view of Jesus Christ suffering for you, and your heart deeply impressed with this object, it becomes unnecessary to make use of any particular considerations ; it being certain, that mental prayer is never better performed, than when the heart is more actively employed than the understanding. In this case, our only concern should be to avail ourselves of these precious moments to form good resolutions.

EIGHTH DIRECTION.

Although the practice here recommended, consists in daily meditating on the passion of our Lord, it ought not, however, in conformity with the general practice of the faithful, to prevent us from applying ourselves to the different mysteries which the church, in the course of the year, successively proposes to the veneration of her children. On the principal festivals, therefore, it will be proper to interrupt the ordinary course of our meditations; unless by a particular attraction, we feel disposed in the evening to think on some mystery of the passion, exclusive of the meditation we have already made in reference to the mystery of the day.

NINTH DIRECTION.

Be well assured that one of the principal parts of meditation is the *preparation*: for on this all the rest chiefly depends. This preparation consists in entering into ourselves, in recalling our mind from all external things, and in forgetting creatures, to think only of God. To collect ourselves in this manner, some little time is requisite; for the mind is not always well disposed for such composure; we must gently tranquillize it, and sedulously withdraw it from all conversation with creatures; which is done by imposing silence on our senses, by keeping the body in a modest posture, and by seeking as much as possible to be alone with God. After

considering the greatness of God, to whom you are going to address yourself, and your own unworthiness and inability for so important an action, you are fervently to implore God's grace and assistance for doing it well. In these dispositions you may profitably make use of the following method.



AN EASY METHOD OF MEDITATION,

For such as first undertake this Holy Exercise.

PRAYERS BEFORE MEDITATION.

Place yourself in the presence of God.

O, my God, I firmly believe you are present : I adore you in the centre of my heart, where you are pleased to dwell as in your living temple.

Here remain in silence for some time ; respectfully keeping yourself in the presence of God, in order to practise what your words signify.

Excite in yourself a true sorrow for past offences.

How unworthy am I, O my God, to appear before your Divine Majesty, on account of the many sins which I have unhappily committed : I am heartily sorry for them, and most humbly ask forgiveness, desiring to love you with my whole heart.

Then throw yourself in spirit at the feet of Jesus Christ, and beseech him to penetrate your soul with the sentiments of true contrition.

In order to obtain the grace necessary to meditate well, invoke the Holy Ghost.

Come, Holy Spirit, and prepare my soul for prayer ; kindle in my heart the fire of your love. O blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ my Redeemer, and the Mother of all Christians, obtain for me those graces which are necessary to meditate well.

Employ some moments to solicit interiorly the assistance of the Holy Ghost. Afterwards re-

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present to yourself some mystery of the passion of Christ, as described in the following meditations.

During the remainder of the time allotted for meditation,

Endeavor to keep your mind wholly occupied in contemplating Jesus Christ in a state of suffering. To do it more easily, you will in the first place, after the above preparation, apply yourself to the particular subject of your meditation; simply reflecting on the suffering state of our Lord, during the time of his passion, as there represented. If this simple view of your subject be sufficient to tranquillize your mind, and keep it in a state of recollection, proceed no farther: but endeavor to penetrate well the mystery present to your imagination. For in this chiefly consists the fruit and advantage of meditation, viz. that you be thoroughly impressed, and moved with the truths or mysteries on which you meditate; now this may often be effected by the bare representation of a solid truth or mystery, when the mind is calm and tranquil, and seeks God alone in prayer. If the simple view of the mystery be not sufficient to excite your faith, and dispose you to recollection, you may read the following reflections, which are appropriated to each mystery; giving some little time to each, in order to comprehend and practise what you read. Thus you will afford time for the operations of the Spirit of God in your soul, that he may inspire you with those sentiments and affections which it shall please him to suggest on each particular subject.

If this prove still insufficient to arrest the

evagations of your mind, and fix your attention, you may, in this case, have recourse to some of the general considerations here annexed ; which are applicable to all the mysteries of our Saviour's passion.

1. *Who* is he that suffers these torments ? He is God : he is innocence itself.

2. How *grievous* are these torments ? They are such as cannot be comprehended.

3. *From whom* does he suffer these torments ? From those very persons for whose sake he was made man ; from his own children, on whom he had bestowed so many benefits.

4. *For whom*, and on what account ? —For all persons without exception ; and to atone for the sins of the whole world.

5. How great is the *love* and *affection* of him who suffers ?—It is beyond all measure infinite.

6. What are the principal *virtues* which he practises in his sufferings, and which he recommends to his followers ?—Meekness, humility, patience, courage, obedience, and zeal.

However little we reflect on these particulars, we shall find abundant matter to occupy us usefully during our meditation.

After this we must abandon ourselves to such pious affections as it shall please God to communicate ; and, finally, take care to correspond with the good resolutions which he shall suggest for our spiritual advancement.

But, if after carefully disposing yourself for meditation, you are still unable to recollect your thoughts ; if perplexing distractions still crowd upon your mind ; be not discouraged ; content yourself with saying, from time to time, these, or such

prayers, "*My God, I love you ; My God, I adore you ; I return you most humble thanks.*" Suffer patiently, and in a spirit of meekness, the trouble you experience in this state ; offer it up to God, in union with the sufferings of our Lord, and you will unquestionably derive much benefit from your meditation : for our Lord is frequently pleased, even during the time of meditation, to make us pass from the meditation of his sufferings to a participation of them. He has often dealt thus with the greatest saints ; leaving them in spiritual dryness, and interiorly crucifying them, by the difficulties which they experience in this holy exercise.

PRAYERS AFTER MEDITATION.

I most sincerely thank you, O my God, for all the good thoughts and resolutions with which you have favored me during the time of prayer. I offer them to your honor and glory, and most humbly beg your grace to be faithful in observing them.

After this prayer, wait a few moments, in order to allow your heart time for feeling those sentiments of love and gratitude which ought to accompany your words.

Unite yourself in spirit, to all those who are this day employed in meditating on the passion of Christ, and desire to participate in their prayers.

O eternal Father, in union with all those who this day meditate on the passion of your beloved Son, I offer to you all the torments which he endured for our salvation, and in expiation for our sins ; I also earnestly beg that we may be

always united together by mutual love, and most tenderly attached to Jesus Christ crucified.

Accordingly, unite yourself in mind and heart to all the true lovers of Christ's passion, interiorly desiring to make with them but one heart and one soul.

At the conclusion of your meditation,

Endeavor, as much as possible, to keep your mind and heart recollected ; and after entertaining your Saviour, do not lightly abandon his company.

They who, after meditation, think no more of Christ during the rest of the day, are guilty of this fault ; they act as if they meant by meditation to pay him only a sort of compliment, and then to take leave of him till the next day. Hence the little fruit they derive from meditation !

To obviate this inconvenience, adopt the following salutary practice :

At the conclusion of your meditation, endeavor to unite yourself most intimately to our Lord ; resolving to cherish this happy union during the whole day, that you may be able to say with the great apostle, " Who shall separate me from the love of Jesus Christ ?"

Frequently in the day renew yourself in this happy disposition of union ; which may be done by a simple remembrance of our Lord, joined with the real desire of being united to him.

This little practice is excellent for advancing a soul quickly in the way of virtue ; and daily experience evinces how admirably it is calculated to perfect the soul in the exercise of prayer, which it renders in a manner continual. For

when we are faithful in renewing this sweet remembrance of the presence of Jesus Christ, he seconds our endeavors, and becomes so familiar to us, that we cannot remain long without thinking on him ; and when, for some time, we have thus anxiously sought after this amiable Saviour, he is graciously pleased, in his turn, to seek us, and to indulge us with the sweet recollection of his presence, without any application on our part. St. Teresa assures us, that he takes so much pleasure in communicating this favor to certain faithful souls, that he seemingly follows them wherever they go ; and, on their part, they cannot endure to be long separated from him, in consequence of the agreeable emotions which they experience from his holy and amiable presence.

*An act of divine love to Jesus Christ crucified,**

FROM ST. FRANCIS XAVIER.

(O DEUS ! EGO AMO TE.)

Thou art, my God, sole object of my love,
 Not for the hopes of endless joys above,
 Nor for the fears of endless pains below,
 Which those who love thee not must undergo.
 For me, and such as me, thou deignest to bear
 The ignominious cross, the nails, the spear ;
 A thorny crown transpierced thy sacred brow,
 While bloody sweats from every member flow ;
 For me, in tortures thou resign'st thy breath,
 Embraced me on the cross, and saved me by thy
 death.

* Translated by Alex. Pope, when on a visit at Lady Holt's in Sussex, (Mr. Caryl's) at the request of the Rev. F. Brown, the chaplain.

And can these sufferings fail my heart to move ?
What but thyself can now deserve my love ?
Such as then was, and is, thy love to me,
Such is, and shall be still, my love to thee ;
To thee, Redeemer, mercy's sacred spring,
My God, my Maker, Father, and my King.

AMEN.

O Jesus Christ, my God and Saviour, I know and am convinced, by the light of thy grace, that to love thee, and to live only for thee, is the best employment of my life. I will, therefore, with thy divine assistance, employ my mind and heart, all my strength, and every instant of my life, in thy holy service. My only wish, my sole ambition, shall be to love thee, and to persuade others to love thee, now and for ever. Amen.

TO JESUS CHRIST ON THE CROSS.

O divine Jesus, I offer to thee for N. all the pains thou endurest in every part of thy body, and in every faculty of thy soul, during the three hours thou remainest agonizing on the cross.

O divine Mediator, I offer to thee that heroic charity which thou didst exercise in praying for thy enemies, and excusing them to thy Father, saying, "Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do."

O adorable Saviour, I offer to thee that great goodness which thou didst testify to the penitent thief, in promising him Paradise.

O fountain of living water springing up to eternal life, I offer to thee that ardent thirst which thou

didst experience on the cross, and which was a figure of thy ardent thirst for the salvation of souls.

O sweet Jesus, the consolation of the afflicted, I offer to thee that painful dereliction of thy heavenly Father on the cross, which forced from thee that amorous complaint, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me."

O Jesus, the author and finisher of our salvation, I offer to thee that incomprehensible love, with which thou didst accomplish the great work of man's redemption, by performing and suffering every thing that had been foretold of thee by the prophets, saying "all is consummated."

O Jesus, our true life, I offer to thee that recommendation which thou didst make of thy soul into the hands of thy Father; and I earnestly recommend my poor soul into thy hands, as belonging to thee, because, redeemed by thy precious blood.

THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

ACCORDING TO THE FOUR EVANGELISTS.

1. AND when they had sung a hymn, Jesus came out, and went, according to his custom, to the Mountain of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. Then Jesus saith to them: all you shall be scandalized in me this night; for it is written, *I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be dispersed.* But after I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Gallilee. And Peter answering, said to him, though all men shall be scandalized in thee, I will never be scandalized. Jesus said to him, Amen I say to thee, that in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou wilt deny me thrice. Peter saith to him the more vehemently, though I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. And in like manner said all the disciples.

2. Then Jesus cometh with them into a village called Gethsemani, where there was a garden, into which he and his disciples entered. (And Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place; because Jesus had often resorted thither together with his disciples.) And he said to his disciples, sit you here, till I go and pray yonder. And he taketh with him Peter, James, and John, and began to fear, and to be heavy, to be sorrowful

and sad. Then he saith to them, my soul is sorrowful even to death : stay here and watch with me. And having gone a little further, he was withdrawn a little from them, about a stone's cast ; and kneeling down, he prayed, saying, Father, if thou wilt remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done. And an angel appeared to him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he fell on his face, and prayed the more earnestly. And he prayed with a strong cry and tears, that if it were possible, the hour might pass from him, saying, Oh, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me : nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. All things are possible to thee, take away this cup from me, but not what I will, but what thou wilt. And his sweat was as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them asleep through grief. And he said, why sleep you ? arise and pray, lest you enter into temptation. And he said to Peter : Simon, sleepest thou ? What ! could you not watch one hour with me ? Watch ye and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. And going away again, he prayed, saying the same words : my Father, if this chalice may not pass away, but I must drink it, thy will be done. And he cometh again, and findeth them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. And they knew not what to answer him. And leaving them, he went again, and prayed the third time, saying the self-same words. Then cometh he to his disci-

ples the third time, and saith to them : sleep ye now and take your rest. It is enough : the hour is come : behold the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go : lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand. And while he was yet speaking, behold Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, having taken a band of soldiers, and servants from the High Priest and Pharisees, cometh thither, and with him a great multitude with swords and clubs, with lanterns and torches, sent from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him, had given them a sign, saying, whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he ; take him, and lead him away carefully. And as soon as he was come, he went before them, and forthwith coming to Jesus, to kiss him, he said, Hail Rabbi, and kissed him. And Jesus said to him, Friend, wherefore art thou come ? Judas, is it with a kiss thou betrayest the Son of Man ? Therefore Jesus knowing all things that were to come upon him, went forward, and said to them, whom seek ye ? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith to them, I am *He*. Judas also that betrayed him, stood with them. As soon, therefore, as he had said to them, I am He, they went backward and fell on the ground. Then he asked them again, Whom seek ye ? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he. If therefore you seek me, let these go their way : that the word might be fulfilled which he said : of these whom thou hast given me, I have not lost any one. Then they drew near, and laid hands on Jesus, and held him. When they that were

about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we strike with the sword? Then Simon Peter, one of those who were with Jesus, stretching forth his hand, drew his sword, and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear, and the name of the servant was Malchus. But Jesus answered and said, Forbear, no more; and he touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to Peter, put up thy sword into the scabbard; for all they that ~~take~~ the sword shall perish with the sword.—Thinkest thou that I cannot ask my Father, and he will give me presently more than twelve legions of angels. But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that so it must be done? The chalice which my Father had given me, shall I not drink it? Then the band, and the tribune, and the servants of the Jews, took Jesus and bound him. In that same hour, Jesus said to the chief priests and magistrates of the temple, and the ancients that were come to him: Are you come out as against a thief, with swords and clubs, to apprehend me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and you laid not hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness. But all this was done that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all his disciples leaving him, fled away. But a certain young man followed him, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body, and they laid hold on him. But he casting off the linen cloth, fled from them naked.

3. And they that laid hold on Jesus, took him, and led him away to Annas first; for he was the father-in-law to Caiphas, who was the

high-priest of that year. Now Caiphas was *He* who had given the counsel to the Jews : that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

From Annas they led him to Caiphas, the high-priest, where all the priests and the scribes, and the ancients were assembled together. And Peter followed him afar off, and so did another disciple. And that disciple was known to the high-priest, and went in with Jesus to the palace of the high-priest : but Peter stood at the door without. Then the other disciple who was known to the high-priest, went out and spoke to the portress, and brought in Peter : and when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were sitting about it, Peter was in the midst of the servants, and warmed himself at the fire, that he might see the end. The high-priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him : I have spoken openly to the world : I have always taught in the synagogue and in the temple, whither all the Jews resort, and in secret I have spoken nothing. Why askest thou me ? Ask them who have heard what I have spoken to them : behold they know what things I have said. And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers standing by, gave Jesus a blow, saying : answerest thou the high-priest so ? Jesus answered him : if I have spoken evil, give testimony of the evil : but if well, why smitest thou me ? Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, that they might put him to death ; but they found none : yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none :

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for many bore false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together. At last came two false witnesses, and rising up, they bore false witness against him, saying: we heard him say, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and after three days, to rebuild it: I will destroy this temple made of hands, and, within three days I will build another, not made with hands. And their testimony did not agree. And the high-priest rose, and stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying: answerest thou nothing to the things laid to thy charge by these men? But Jesus held his peace, and answered nothing. And the men that held Jesus mocked him; and some began to spit on him; they struck him, and plucked off his hair. And when they had blindfolded him, they smote his face, and asked him, saying: prophesy unto us, who is he that struck thee.

As soon as it was day, the ancients of the people, and the chief priests, and scribes, met together, and brought Jesus before the council, saying: if thou be Christ, tell us: and he replied: if I should tell you, you would not believe me; and if I ask you, you will not answer me, nor dismiss me. But hereafter the Son of Man shall be sitting at the right hand of the power of God. They all then said: art thou therefore the Son of God? Who said: you say it, for I am. Again the high-priest asked of him, and said: art thou Christ, the Son of the blessed God. I adjure thee, by the living God, that thou tell us, if thou art Christ the Son of God. Jesus replied: thou hast said it. Nevertheless I say to you, hereafter you shall see the

Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high-priest rent his garments, saying : he hath blasphemed : what need we any more witnesses ? Behold now you have heard the blasphemy ; what is your opinion ? They answered and said : he is guilty of death. What need we any further testimony ? For we ourselves have heard it from his own mouth. Who all condemned him to be guilty of death. Then they spit on his face, and buffeted him ; others blindfolded him, and struck his face with the palms of their hands, saying : prophesy unto us, O Christ, who is he that struck thee. And many other things blasphemously spoke they against him.

5. Now when Peter was in the court below, one of the maid-servants of the high-priest, that was portress, came ; and when she had seen Peter warming himself, and had looked at him, she said : this man also was with him. Art not thou also one of this man's disciples ? Thou also wast with Jesus the Galilean. But he denied before them all, saying : woman, I know him not ; neither understand I what thou sayest. Now the servants and ministers stood there at a fire of coals, because it was cold, and warmed themselves. And with them was Peter also standing, and warming himself. And he went forth before the court, and the cock crew, and as he went out of the gate, another maid saw him, and she saith to them that were there : this man also was with Jesus of Nazareth : and after a little while another seeing him, said : thou also art one of them : art not thou one of his disci-

ples? Again he denied with an oath, and said: "I am not; I do not know the man." After the space, as it were, of one hour, another man, one of the servants of the high-priest, (a kinsman to him whose ear Peter cut off) affirmed it, saying: of a truth this man also was with him, for he also is a Galilean. Did I not see thee in the garden with him? And they that stood by came and said to Peter: surely thou also art one of them, for even thy speech doth discover thee that thou art a Galilean. Again therefore Peter denied, and he began to curse and to swear, saying: I know not this man of whom you speak. And immediately as he was yet speaking the cock crew again. And the Lord turning, looked at Peter: and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him: before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice; and going out, he wept bitterly.

6. Now in the morning early, the chief priests, with the ancients, and the scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation against Jesus, that they might get him put to death. And the whole multitude of them rising up, brought him bound from Caiphas into the palace of the prætor, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate, the governor. And they themselves entered not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

7. Then Judas, who betrayed him, seeing that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the ancients, saying: I have sinned in betraying innocent blood. But they said: what is that to us? Look thou to it. And casting

down the pieces of silver in the temple he departed, and went and hanged himself with a halter. But the chief priests, having taken the pieces of silver, said: it is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And after they had consulted together, they bought with them the Potter's Field, to be a burying place for strangers. Wherefore that field was called *Haceldama*, that is, the *Field of Blood*, even to this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying: and they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they prized of the children of Israel; and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

8. PILATE then went out to them, and said: what accusation bring you against this man? They answered and said to him: if he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up to thee. Then said Pilate unto them: "Take him you, and judge him according to your law." The Jews therefore said to him: "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which he spake, signifying what death he should die. And they began to accuse him, saying: "We have found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ, a king." Then Pilate went into the hall again, and called Jesus. And Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, saying: "Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him: "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or have others told it thee of me?" Pilate an-

swered : " Am I a Jew ? Thy own nation, and the chief priests have delivered thee up to me. What hast thou done ?" Jesus answered : " My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews : but now my kingdom is not from hence." Pilate therefore said to him : " Art thou a king then ?" Jesus answered : " Thou sayest that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth. Every one that is of the truth beareth my voice." Pilate saith to him : " What is truth ?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to the chief priests, and to the people : " I find no fault in this man." And the chief priests accused him of many things ; but he answered nothing. Then saith Pilate unto him : " Dost thou hear how great testimonies they alledge against thee ? answerest thou nothing ? Behold in how many things they accuse thee." But Jesus still answered nothing to any word, so that the governor wondered very much. But they persisted, saying : He stirreth up the people, teaching over all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place. And Pilate hearing of Galilee, asked if he were a man of Galilee : and as soon as he knew that he belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him away to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem.

9. Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad ; for he had been desirous a long time to see him, and hoped to see some miracle done by him. Then he put many questions to

him, but he answered him nothing. And the chief priests, and the scribes stood by, and vehemently accused him. But Herod, with his guard, despised him, and with scorn clothed him in a white garment, and sent him back to Pilate. And the same day, Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves.

10. And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people, said to them: "You have presented to me this man, as one perverting the people; and behold, I have examined him before you, have found no fault in this man, touching those things which you lay to his charge; nor yet hath Herod: for I remitted you to him. And behold, nothing has been done against him, as if he deserved death. When, therefore I have chastised him, I will release him." Now at that feast, the governor was accustomed, and was obliged to set at liberty one prisoner, whomsoever they desired; and he had then a notorious prisoner, that was named Barabbas, a robber, who was put in prison, with some seditious men, who, in the sedition, had committed murder. The multitude, therefore, being gathered together, they began to desire Pilate to do as he had ever done to them. Pilate saith to them: "I find no cause at all in him; but ye have a custom, that I should release one unto you at the passover: will you therefore, that I release unto you the king of the Jews? Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus, who is called Christ?" For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him up out of envy. (And

as he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying : " Have thou nothing to do with that just man. For I have suffered many things this day in a dream on his account." But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask for Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. Pilate, therefore, willing to release Jesus, answered, and spoke again to them : " Whether of the two will you have released unto you ?" And the whole multitude shouted out together, " Make away with this man, and release to us Barabbas." And Pilate answered, and said again to them : " What will you then that I do to the king of the Jews, who is called Christ?" But they cried out, crucify him, crucify him. And he, a third time, said to them : Why, what evil hath he done ? I find no cause of death in him. I will chastise him, and let him go." But they persisted with loud voices, desiring that he might be crucified, and their voices prevailed. Then Pilate took Jesus, and scourged him.

11. Then the soldiers led him into the common hall, and gathered together unto him the whole band, and stripping him, they put a scarlet cloak about him ; and plating a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand ; and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, and began to salute him, saying : Hail, King of the Jews ! And they gave him blows, and they struck his head with a reed ; and they spit on him, and bowing their knees, they worshipped. Pilate, therefore, went out again, and saith to them : " Behold I bring him forth unto you, that you

may know that I find no cause in him." (Jesus therefore went forth, bearing the crown of thorns, and the purple garment.) And Pilate saith to them: "Behold the man." When the chief priests therefore, and the officers had seen him, they cried out, saying: Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith to them: "Take him you, and crucify him; for I find no fault in him." The Jews answered him: We have a law, and according to the law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God. When Pilate heard these words, he was more afraid; and went again into the judgment hall, and he saith to Jesus: "Whence art thou?" But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate therefore saith to him: "Speakest thou not to me? knowest thou not, that I have power to crucify thee, and that I have power to release thee?" Jesus answered: "Thou wouldst not have any power at all against me, unless it were given thee from above: therefore he who delivered me to thee, hath the greater sin." And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release Jesus; but the Jews cried out, saying, "If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar's friend; for every one that maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar." When Pilate had heard these words, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat, in the place that is called *Lithostrotos*, and in Hebrew, *Gabbatha*. And it was the day of preparation for the Passover, about the sixth hour, and he saith to the Jews: "Behold your king." But they cried out: "Away with him, crucify him." Pilate saith to them: "Shall I crucify your king?" The chief priests answered: "We

have no king but Cæsar." And Pilate seeing that he prevailed nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, taking water, washed his hands before the people, saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this just man: look you to it." And all the people answering, said: "His blood be upon us, and upon our children." So Pilate being willing to satisfy the people, gave sentence, that it should be as they required; and he released to them him, who for murder and sedition, had been cast into prison, whom they had desired: but Jesus he delivered up to their will, to be crucified.

12. And they took Jesus, and led him away, and, after they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own garments on him; and they led him out to crucify him. And he bearing his cross, went forth to that place which is called Calvary, but in Hebrew, Golgotha. And as they led him away, they found a man of Cyrene, named Simon, the father of Alexander, and of Rufus, coming out of the country. Him they forced to bear his cross; and they laid it upon him to carry after Jesus. And there followed him a great crowd of people, and of women; who bewailed and lamented for him. And Jesus turning towards them, said: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over me, but weep over yourselves and over your children. For behold the days shall come, in which it shall be said, happy they that are barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts that never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, fall upon us, and to the hills, cover us. For if they do these

things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?" And with him were led two other malefactors to be put to death. And they bring Jesus into the place called Golgotha, which being interpreted, is the place of Calvary, (or of skulls.) And they gave him to drink, wine mingled with myrrh; and when he had tasted, he would not drink. There they crucified him, and with two others, robbers; one on the right hand, and the other on the left, and Jesus in the midst. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith: and with the wicked he was reputed. Then said Jesus: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Pilate wrote also an inscription, and put it upon the cross over his head. And the writing was, *This is Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews*. This inscription many of the Jews read, because the place where Jesus was crucified, was near the city, and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate: "Write not the king of the Jews, but that he said, I am the king of the Jews. Pilate answered: "What I have written, I have written."

13. When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part, and also his coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven all over. They said, therefore, one to another, "Let us not cut it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the scripture might be fulfilled, saying: "They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture they have cast lots," (Ps. 21.) These things did the soldiers, and then sat down

and watched him. And they that passed by, blasphemed him, wagging their heads, and saying, Vah, thou that destroyest the temple of God, and in three days buildest it up again, save thyself : If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Now the people stood looking on, and the rulers with them : in like manner also the chief priests, with the scribes and ancients, mocking, said one to another : He saved others, himself he cannot save ; if he be the king of Israel, let him come down from the cross, and we will believe him. Let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God : let Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross, that we may see and believe. He trusted in God ; let him deliver him now, if he is pleased with him ; for he said, " I am the Son of God." And the soldiers also made sport with him, coming, and offering him vinegar ; and saying, if thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. Now one of the malefactors who were hanging, blasphemed him, saying, " If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." But the other answering, rebuked him, and said, " Neither dost thou fear God, being under the same condemnation. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds ; but he hath done no evil." And he said to Jesus : Lord, be mindful of me, when thou shalt come to thy kingdom. And Jesus said to him : " Amen, I say to thee : this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

14. Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalen. When Jesus therefore had seen his mother, and the disciple

standing by whom he loved, he saith to his mother: "Woman, behold thy son." After that, he saith to the disciple, "Behold thy mother." And from that time, the disciple took her into his own house.

15. And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth, till the ninth hour; and the sun was darkened. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying: *Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani?* which is, being interpreted: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said: "'This man calleth for Elias.'" Afterwards Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith: "I thirst." Now there stood a vessel with vinegar: and immediately one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. The rest said: "Stay, let us see, if Elias will come to take him down." When Jesus, therefore had taken the vinegar, he said: "It is consummated." And when he had cried again, with a loud voice, he said: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And having said this, he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

16. And behold the veil of the temple was rent in two, from the top even to the bottom: and the earth quaked; and the rocks were rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had slept, arose, and coming out of their tombs, after his resurrection, went into the city, and appeared to many. And the

centurion who stood over against him, seeing what was done, and that Jesus had given up the ghost, crying out in this manner, glorified God, saying: "Truly this was a just man; indeed this man was the Son of God." And they that were with him, watching Jesus, having seen the earthquake, and the things that were done, were greatly afraid, saying: "Indeed this man was the Son of God." And all the multitude of those who were present at this spectacle, and saw the things that happened, returned, knocking their breasts.

17. And all his acquaintance stood at a distance, and the women that had followed him from Galilee, beholding these things: among whom was Mary Magdalen, and Mary, the mother of James the Less, and of Joseph, and Salome mother of the sons of Zebedee: who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and many other women that came up with him to Jerusalem.

18. The Jews then, (because it was the day of preparation,) that the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath, (for that was a solemn Sabbath-day,) desired Pilate, that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. The soldiers therefore came, and they broke the legs of the first, and also of the other who was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they broke not his legs. But one of the soldiers opened his side with a spear, and presently there came forth blood and water. And he that saw it, hath given testimony, and his testimony is true; and he knoweth that

he saith true; that ye might believe. For these things were done, that the scripture might be fulfilled: "You shall not break a bone of him." And again, another scripture saith: "They shall look on him, whom they pierced." Zach. xii. 10.

19. And after these things, when evening was come, (because it was the *parasceve*, that is the day before the Sabbath,) there came a certain rich man, named Joseph, a noble counsellor, and a good and just man. This man had given no consent to their counsels and proceedings. He was of Arimathea, a city of Judea, who also himself waited for the kingdom of God. This man went in boldly to Pilate, and being a disciple of Jesus, but in private, for fear of the Jews, begged the body of Jesus, that he might take it away. But Pilate wondered that he should be already dead; and sending for the centurion, he asked him if he were already dead? And when he had understood it by the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph, and commanded that it should be delivered. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus: there came also Nicodemus, he that had come to Jesus by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight. And Joseph, buying fine linen, and taking him down, wrapped him up in the fine linen cloth, with spices, as it is the custom of the Jews to bury. And there was in the place where he was crucified, a garden; and in the garden a new monument, wherein no man yet had been laid, hewn out in the rock. There, by reason of the day of preparation among the Jews, they

laid Jesus, and rolled a great stone to the door of the monument, and departed ; for that was the day of preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. And the women that had come with him from Galilee, followed after, and Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre, saw the monument, and how his body was laid. And returning they prepared perfumes, and ointments ; and they rested on the Sabbath, according to the precept *of the law*.

O my adorable Saviour, I offer to thee, in satisfaction for my sins, and for obtaining N. all the sufferings and humiliations of thy dolorous passion, thy cruel death on the cross, and all that precious blood thou hast lovingly shed for our redemption.

MEDITATIONS
ON THE
PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,
In the Way of familiar Colloquies,
FOR EVERY DAY IN THE MONTH.

MEDITATION FOR THE FIRST DAY.

*Our Lord Jesus Christ institutes the Sacrament of
the Altar.*

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

My flesh is meat indeed ; it is the heavenly nourishment of my children.

It is the bread which came down from heaven, giving life, grace, love, and strength to the soul.

I myself am this bread ; it is my body, my real flesh : he that eats of this bread, shall live for ever. He who eats my flesh, abides in me, and I in him.

Such is the treasure which my love has bequeathed to mankind, as a memorial of my passion, and of all that I have done for them.—What use do you make of this treasure ?

Do you not abuse it, and, by receiving it unworthily, turn it into a treasure of wrath ? This is the case with those who receive it in mortal

sin. They imitate the perfidy of the Jews, and, instead of allowing me to reign in their hearts as I desire, they crucify me again by sin.

If any one hunger and thirst after justice ; if he desire to be filled with my graces and favors ; let him come to me, the source of justice, and the fountain of living water, But let him first prove himself ; for I am the bread of *life*, prepared for those who are living in the state of grace ; to such my blood communicates new purity and perfection : but to them who are dead in sin, it becomes of no avail ; it renders them still more criminal and abominable ; for he who eats my body, and drinks my blood unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself.

My son, give me thy heart ; I desire it should become my tabernacle and dwelling place ; but it must first be purified from the filth of sin. He who dares to approach to me without this preparation ; who compels me to enter into his unclean heart, abuses my loving kindness ; he offers me a kind of violence ; he forces me from the altar into a place which I abhor, by obliging me to dwell in a heart defiled with sin, the enemy of my Father, the tabernacle of devils, and the sink of impurities.

Instead of making me reign as king of his heart, the sinner treats me as a slave ; he contemptuously mocks me, and treads under foot my blood, my graces, and my love.

In a word, that you may better understand the injury I receive by a sacrilegious communion, and what my grief would be, were I capable of grief, represent to your imagination the miserable condition of those criminals who were for-

merly tied to dead bodies, and forced to drag out the remainder of their lives in the midst of stench and corruption. Yes, in this manner am I treated by a wretched sinner, when he obliges me to dwell in his corrupted heart, far more horrible to me, than a filthy carcase to a living man.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O my adorable Master, how true it is that having loved mankind during life, you, at the end, displayed the greatest excess of your love, by instituting this august sacrament, which comprises all other goods!

I easily conceive, divine Jesus, that in this holy sacrament, you are truly the treasure of my heart, and that, provided I approach to you in a proper manner, I shall be enriched with graces, and all spiritual blessings.

When I have the happiness to receive you, I possess all that my soul desires; I have within me what constitutes the happiness of the saints and angels in heaven. It is here, O Jesus, I am all yours, and you are all mine; I abide in you, and you abide in me; you are my life, I live in you, I live by you, I live for you! O incomprehensible happiness, though little known, or sought after by men! How solicitous, how eager should we be to enjoy such a transcendent benefit!

But alas! when I consider, O Lord, that all these advantages are lost, and, in lieu of them, the greatest miseries incurred by those who receive you unworthily, I tremble with fear at the recollection of so many communions which

I have made with so little attention and preparation.

What shall I do to repair this neglect, this dreadful loss? I will do penance for my sins; I will seriously examine the state of my conscience; I will do my utmost to purify my heart, and to adorn it by the practice of all christian virtues; that so I may, in future, more worthily approach to this august sacrament.

It would seem, most amiable Redeemer, if we may judge from the indifference and backwardness of Christians, that they have forgotten that your flesh is the true nourishment of our souls.

Alas! although our souls are perishing with hunger, and languishing with thirst, yet, as if, like the body, they were made only of earth, we nourish them only with dirt and the food of corruption.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

What a happiness, to be nourished, penetrated, filled, and fortified with the body, the blood, the soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ!

What a happiness, to be animated with his spirit, directed by his light, enriched with his graces! These are the effects produced by this great sacrament in those who receive it worthily. This happiness, my soul, is for thee, if thou prepare thyself for it in a proper manner,

But, on the contrary, how dreadful is thy misfortune, if thou receive this holy sacrament in the state of mortal sin! This would be to abuse the greatest of all graces; to defile thyself at the very fountain which is designed to purify thee; to harden thy heart by what is most ca-

pable of softening its obduracy ; this would be to shew the greatest ingratitude towards God, at a time when he displays in thy favor the most signal marks of his love and tenderness.

To avoid so great an evil, practice the following means.

MEANS.

1. Every day to think, for a few minutes at least, on the sufferings of Jesus Christ.

2. To labor seriously to amend your faults, and to purify your heart from the defilements of sin, that you may often have the happiness and consolation of receiving Jesus Christ by a worthy communion.

3. Often to make a visit to Jesus Christ in the holy sacrament of the altar, and sincerely to offer him your heart to be his living tabernacle ; but see that it be well prepared for him by prayer and good works.

4. When you assist at mass, which you should do as often as possible, receive Jesus Christ spiritually ; by desiring to unite yourself to him in this august sacrament with great love and affection.

5. Whenever you are so happy as to communicate, consider attentively Jesus Christ with the eyes of faith ; consider him as King of Heaven, who desires to reign in your heart ; as your sovereign Lord, whose presence claims all your respect ; but, at the same time, in order to excite your love and confidence, consider him also as your friend and brother, who comes to visit you ; as a tender and affectionate father, who nourishes you with his own flesh and blood ;

as a chaste spouse, who full of love and zeal, wishes to communicate to your soul his choicest favors, and to unite himself to you in the most intimate and familiar manner.

O sacred banquet, in which Christ is received : in which the memory of his passion is renewed ; and the soul is filled with grace ; and a pledge is given us of future glory.

V. Thou hast given them bread from heaven.
Alleluia.

R. Replenished with all sweetness and delight.
Alleluia.

Let us Pray.

O God, who has left us in this wonderful sacrament a perpetual memorial of thy passion and death : grant, we beseech thee, so to reverence the sacred mysteries of thy body and blood, that we may continually find in our souls the fruit of thy redemption. Who livest, &c.

SECOND MEDITATION.

Jesus leaves the guest-chamber to go and die for us.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

It is necessary that the Son of Man should undergo many sufferings ; that he should be rejected by the ancients, by the chief priests and scribes ; and finally be put to death. All this I ardently wish to see accomplished for the love of you.

I know the torments that are prepared for

me ; whatever I am to suffer, in soul or body, has ever been present to my mind ; I already feel, by anticipation, the excess and violence of all my future sufferings. But the ardent love which I have for my father's glory, and my great compassion for the wretched state to which you are reduced by sin, impel me cheerfully to run the dreadful career of my passion, without fearing the malice of my executioners, or the most cruel torments which they can inflict upon me.

Let then all pusillanimous sinners be covered with confusion and shame, who have hitherto done nothing for my glory, and to whom every thing seems difficult that regards my service. Are not you one of this ungrateful number ? Since your first coming into the world, what have you performed to promote my glory ?

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

It is too true, my divine Master, that we are guilty of the blackest ingratitude towards you ; give me grace humbly to acknowledge my fault, let me be covered with extreme confusion and sorrow in thy presence ; touch and soften my heart, and shew mercy to me.

What is it we undertake for your glory ? What do we perform for our salvation ? What are we ready to suffer for our sins ? We often, indeed, have good desires ; but the smallest difficulties keep us back, and retard us in our course.

After a good confession, we sometimes begin a more christian life, but with such faint-heart-

edness, that we relapse again on the first occasion that presents any difficulty. By a variety of reflections, suggested by self-love, we are apt, on the one hand, to magnify the unavoidable hardships that occur in the execution of our designs ; and, on the other, to diminish the sense we ought to entertain of our indispensable obligations : this is owing to our seldom thinking on them, or on the example you have set us, or the recompence which you have prepared for those who love and serve you with fidelity.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Behold here an excellent means of salvation, presented thee by divine providence. It is daily to meditate for a quarter of an hour on the passion of thy divine Master. Is thy piety so remiss, thy tepidity so great, as to refuse making trial of a practice which is holy in itself, highly advantageous to thee, and most acceptable to Jesus Christ ?

So much does thy Saviour desire it, that he has chosen the greatest of the sacraments to serve thee as a memorial of his sufferings. *Do this*, (said he, when speaking of the mass,) *in remembrance of me*. And the apostle adds : *For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink this chalice, you shall show forth the death of the Lord*.

If thou daily consideredst how much thy salvation has cost Jesus Christ, and what dreadful torments he endured to open heaven for thee, how is it possible thou shouldst live so carelessly, and serve God with so much tepidity ?

To obtain the pardon of thy sins, the Son of God was to suffer every kind of reproaches and torments : such was the will of his Father ; he knows it ; he prepares himself accordingly, and with an unshaken constancy, undertakes this great work for the love of thee. And thou, vile creature, art sunk in sloth and indolence ; although this great work will still remain imperfect, unless thou have the courage to drink the remainder of the chalice presented to thee, and thus *fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ*, i. e. unless thou be willing to do violence to thyself, and like him, to suffer whatever it pleases the Almighty. Thou knowest this important truth, and art thou still unwilling to submit to the least suffering ? Thou must reform thy conduct, and choose rather to suffer something, than to lose thy soul. In order to this, observe the following means.

MEANS.

1. Often make this reflection : To-day I have a great affair on my hands, the affair of my salvation ; it is of the utmost importance ; it is extremely urgent, and there is no time to be lost. From this very day I will begin seriously to attend to it. This affair is so great, that Jesus Christ during life made it his particular business ; for this he prayed so much, labored so much, endured so much ; but though by shedding his blood for the love of me, he has paid the price of my redemption, and thus performed the principal part, yet he has not done all ; for unless I comply with what his Father expects

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from me, whatever he has done will be useless, and serve only for my greater condemnation.

2. Humbly to offer to the Almighty all your pains, labors, and sufferings of this life, in union with the pains and sufferings of Jesus Christ.

3. To mortify yourself on proper occasions, and do violence to your inclinations : every day to perform some good work, and frequently to ask yourself : What have I done this day for my salvation ? To save my soul there is no sacrifice which I ought not willingly to make ; and hitherto, alas ! I have done nothing.

THIRD MEDITATION.

Jesus praying in the Garden.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

LEARN of me *when* you must pray, *how* you must pray, and *why* you must pray.

Watch and *pray*, lest you enter into temptation ; and let every good work, or considerable undertaking, be preceded by prayer.

If you suffer, or are afflicted in mind or body, have recourse to prayer ; it will comfort you and sanctify your troubles. In the garden I was sorrowful even unto death ; but, by persevering in prayer, I obtained courage and strength to drink the bitter chalice of my passion.

Pray with great *humility*, in consideration of the multitude and enormity of your sins.

I prayed *prostrate* on the ground, overwhelmed with the weight of your sins, which I had undertaken to expiate.

The sole view of your crimes affected me with so excessive a sadness, that it must have put an end to my life, had I not voluntarily reserved myself to suffer still more on the cross.

Pray with *fervor* and *perseverance*: I prayed a long time, and at three different intervals, to obtain the same request.

Beg that the will of my Father may be ever accomplished; if you pray in this disposition, he will certainly hear you; at least so far as is necessary for your salvation. This lesson of resignation I wished to impress on my followers, and therefore, I always concluded my prayer with these words: *thy will be done.*

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

I now confess, O my divine Master, that my prayers are very defective. I generally pray merely from custom; without love, without respect, and often without thinking on thee.

When will my heart offer to thee, O divine Jesus, a sacrifice of praise worthy of thee? When will my prayers ascend, as a precious perfume, to the throne of thy divine Majesty? Not till thou warmest my heart with the fire of thy love.

But as I am not to expect this favor, but by prayer, I beseech thee, O divine Master, to inspire me with a great esteem and love of this holy exercise. In the gospel thou tellest us: the hour is come when thy true servants will

adore thee *in spirit and truth*. These words are very instructive; they inform me, that prayer is the work of the heart more than of the lips; that it is the principal exercise of the soul; the spirit which ought to animate all our actions; the most important service we can render thee; and the most distinguishing characteristic of thy faithful servants and true children. I return thee most humble thanks for this interior light and instruction with which thou art pleased to favor me.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

1. Be sure to profit by this instruction; and be ever fully convinced of the great necessity of prayer; considering the time spent in it as excellently well employed, since thou art then communing with God on the grand affair of salvation.

2. Dread the common abuse of this precious time. Alas! many christians pray in a manner so unworthy of God, as even to offend him in time of prayer; they pray without attention, without respect, without any sentiment of religion.

3. Those who, in time of prayer, shew no piety or religion, can have but very little of either at any other time; their faith must be weak, and wavering; since they have so little love or respect for the majesty of God, to whom they address themselves. For when will their faith shew itself by raising up their hearts to God, unless in time of prayer? When will their love make them draw near to him, unless

at the hours of prayer ? Not to incur this misfortune, employ the following means.

MEANS.

1. Never to begin your prayers without placing yourself in the presence of God ; without uniting yourself to our Lord in a spirit of love and affection ; without begging his grace to pray well : all which is to be done with great attention.

2. To consider prayer as the source of heavenly blessings, whence the saints derived so many graces.

3. To acquit yourself of prayer as of a most important and necessary duty ; considering it as a tribute which we owe to God ; as the spiritual incense, ascending from the sacrifice of the heart, and not as an empty compliment or ceremony.

4. When you perceive yourself distracted in prayer, to collect your wandering thoughts, by placing yourself again in the presence of God ; saying for this purpose : “ My God have pity on thy servant,” or some other short prayer that is proper to recall your mind to God.

5. Frequently in the day to renew the presence of God, and to offer him some short prayers of the heart, as for example : *O my God, I adore thee ; I desire to love thee ; I offer thee this action which I am going to perform ; be merciful to me a sinner ;* or such like.

6. Often to beg pardon for the sins you commit in prayer, and humbly to confess them,

with a real desire of amendment. All persons ought to acknowledge themselves guilty of faults of this kind.

FOURTH MEDITATION.

Jesus sweating Blood in the Garden.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

AFTER continuing a long time in prayer, I found myself reduced to a kind of agony : a sweat of blood was the effect of my excessive dolours. On this occasion, I prayed with the greater fervor, and my father sent an angel to console me.

Learn hence how much sin displeases me ; learn how abominable it is in the eyes of my Father. I considered its daring insolence, which makes the sinner a rebel to his God : I considered its intolerable weight, which precipitates man to the bottom of hell : I considered its extent, how it spreads its venom and contagion throughout the earth : I considered its effects, and beheld a God irritated, a creature in rebellion against him, man degraded and stripped of his illustrious qualities of *image, servant, friend, and child of God*, and thereby become an object of malediction.

The dreadful view of all these effects produced by sin, forced from me a bloody sweat sufficient even to bedew the ground on which I lay prostrate in prayer : these drops of blood were as so many tears, expressive of the horror with which I was seized ; by them I implored the mercy of

my Father not to inflict on man the terrible evils to which he was exposed by sin.

Behold the example which I have set you ; learn what sorrow you ought to feel at the sight of your crimes, and what horror you ought to conceive for mortal sin.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

Is it possible, O my Lord, that we should be so insensible to the evils which sin occasions in our souls, whilst your hatred of it, and compassion for our miseries, force you to sweat blood from every pore ? The truth is, I have not a right sense of your infinite greatness, and of your infinite sanctity, which occasion in you this horror for sin ; nor have I properly considered the strict obligation of keeping my heart pure from all defilement, since it has the honor of belonging to you, as your temple and place of abode.

It is true, my adorable Redeemer, that it is I who ought to sweat blood, in order to express my sorrow for sin, and my fear of incurring your just indignation : certainly I can never shed tears sufficient to appease your justice ; and yet, with confusion I acknowledge, that my soul has never been duly penetrated with compunction. O give me, dear Saviour, a lively sorrow in proportion to my guilt ; let it be such as may soften my obdurate heart.

But, alas ! whence comes it, that I reflect on my crimes with so little remorse ; that I commit them so easily, and so frequently return to them ? It is undoubtedly owing to want of thought : hence I am not aware of their enormity.

It is because I love you too little ; because I esteem not sufficiently the great affair of my salvation ; and because I am too much attached to this miserable life.

Give me grace, O my divine Saviour, to be more sensible of your many favors to me, and of my great obligations to you ; let me often consider, *who* you are, and what I am ; for then I shall love what you love, and hate what you hate ; and beholding myself nothing but misery and sin, I shall never be without sorrow to bewail my past ingratitude, and my present wretched condition.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Art not thou, my soul, one of those miserable sinners, who, enslaved to the base gratifications of sense, are lulled asleep in the midst of crimes, the very sight of which forced tears from my Redeemer's body.

Think often, and seriously, on all the disorders of thy past life : but if thou be so hardened as not to be sensible of thy sins ; if, so far from shedding blood, not a single tear drop from thine eyes, enter at least into sentiments of humility and confusion, and resolve to beg daily of God an humble and contrite heart. As a help to this, make use of the following means.

MEANS.

1. Faithfully to examine your conscience every evening, in order to stir up yourself to contrition.
2. In punishment of your daily faults, to impose on yourself some penitential work, such as

prayer, mortification, or alms-deeds, if your circumstances will allow it.

3. To bear patiently the labors and sufferings that befall you in your way of life, and to offer them to God in satisfaction for your sins ; as also the disgust and aridities which you experience in prayer.

4. But above all, let us frequently consider the infinite goodness and love of that great God whom we have so often offended, and from whom we have received so many favors ; for, notwithstanding our ingratitude, he still bears with us, and, in spite of our relapses, desires to make us happy with himself in heaven, provided we be sincerely converted to him, and renounce our sinful ways.

5. To imagine that God, in giving us time to do penance, seems daily to say to us : " Be converted to me, and I will be converted to you : " yes, like the father of the prodigal child, he is ever ready to receive us, if we will but quit the ways of iniquity, and give ourselves to him in good earnest.

FIFTH MEDITATION.

Jesus sold, and betrayed by Judas.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

JUDAS, marching at the head of an armed troop, approached me, and said : Hail, master, and kissed me ; and I answered him : Friend, for what art thou come ? Is it thus thou betrayest the Son of Man with a kiss ?

Oh ! how horrible is the crime of Judas !

He sells me for thirty pieces of silver : what injustice on the part of man ! what an humiliation on the part of God ! the vilest slave has been sold at a dearer rate.

He betrays me with a kiss. O what perfidy !

He is my apostle, whom I choose to be a pillar of my church ; to whom I communicated my choicest secrets ; on whom I lavished the greatest kindness.

It is he whom I admitted to my table ; on whom I bestowed the gift of miracles ; whose feet I washed ; and to whom I refused not my own body and blood. Each of these circumstances was as a dagger to pierce my heart, when he gave me the treacherous kiss.

Notwithstanding this, I received him with a sweetness capable of softening the most hardened heart ; to teach you in what manner you should treat enemies, how unjust or cruel soever they may be. I embraced him, I pressed him to my bosom, saying : My friend, what is thy design in coming here ? And this I said, in order to mollify his heart, as also the hearts of all those who blindly imagine that they have sufficient reason to be exasperated against their enemies.

This unhappy wretch was not moved by the tenderness I shewed him ; this obdurate heart would not relent ; and, in return for my loving kindness, he cruelly betrayed me into the hands of my enemies.

You are, no doubt, struck at the sight of such dreadful obduracy ; you are shocked at such base conduct.

But do you consider that there are numberless Christians who imitate this baseness of Judas ; who, like him, betray me with a kiss ; who are insensible to all my graces, and, for a trifling interest, abandon me to my enemies ?

Are not you of this number ? All those persons betray me with a kiss, who communicate unworthily ; who receive me into their heart, and relapse into mortal sin ; who abandon me for a petty interest or pleasure ; such give me up to their passions, and crucify me again in their hearts.

These who, without any serious thought of their conversion, remain, for considerable time, in this unhappy state of guilt, resemble the hardened Judas ; being insensible to my words, to my example, and to all my graces, which I incessantly bestow on them. Are not you at present, or at least have you not been formerly, of this number ? Have you not reason to apprehend falling into this misfortune, in consequence of your baseness, and the little care you take to resist your passions.

Here attentively consider, that one ungoverned passion occasioned the perdition of Judas ; no sooner was his heart enslaved to avarice, than he became capable of every excess ; he stuck at nothing to gratify this cursed love of money. Is there no passion to which you are enslaved ? examine seriously the bottom of your heart, and be always apprehensive of falling into the miserable state of Judas.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

When, O Lord, I consider the terrible fall of this ungrateful disciple, and the inconstancy and hardness of my own heart, I am fully sensible, that, unless you support me by your powerful grace, I shall soon become the companion of his crime, and of his misfortune. But I trust, O my amiable Saviour, that you will shew mercy to me, and graciously preserve me from such perfidy.

In proportion to your multiplied graces bestowed upon me, I will endeavor to be grateful for them, and will never more abuse them, as hitherto I have done.

I sincerely thank you, O my God, that you have not hitherto permitted me to fall into the wretched state of Judas.

Oh! never suffer me to be a slave to my passions: give me grace to overcome and resist them at the beginning.

Let me especially beware of the vice of avarice. Help me, O divine Master, to withstand its attacks, and rather let me die, than shamefully betray you for any worldly interest.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

What can be more horrible than to resemble Judas in cruelly betraying Jesus Christ to his enemies? This will certainly be thy case, if after communion, thou fall into mortal sin, or communicate unworthily.

Thou wilt basely sell and cruelly betray Jesus Christ; and for what? For the sole purpose of

gratifying some brutal passion, as that of revenging thyself, of securing some petty interest, or of obtaining some unlawful, momentary pleasure. Certainly they who imitate the vile conduct of Judas, deserve to feel, like him, the speedy and just punishment of their crime. Judas falls into obduracy; he is given up to the devil; he dies miserably in his sin: such are the dreadful and ordinary effects of relapses, and sacrilegious communions.

What wilt thou do to avoid so horrible a misfortune? Thou must be afraid of wilful sins, and however small, labor to correct them; thou must often go to confession with a sincere desire of amendment; and have recourse to the holy sacrament of the altar to fortify thy weakness. Dread a relapse into mortal sin as the greatest misfortune to thyself, and as the basest ingratitude to thy merciful God.

SIXTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is apprehended and bound by the Soldiers.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

A TROOP of armed soldiers and officers came to apprehend me, as if I were a thief and malefactor. And to make it appear how superior my power is to that of men, I say but two words: *Ego sum—I am he*—and without any other arms, I oblige them to fall prostrate on the ground. Another motive for doing this, was to evince,

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that my apprehension was not owing to their power, but to my own free choice ; for I willingly abandoned myself into their hands, and freely submitted to all their cruelties.

They loaded me with irons, and bound me fast with cords ; but the great love I had for you, made me bear these cords with meekness, and without complaint ; for I considered myself charged with your sins, and bound to make atonement to the justice of God, by undergoing death, and all the punishment to which you were liable.

Where is that grateful acknowledgment which you owe me for your deliverance ? I desire to draw you to me by the amorous cords of divine love ; and you reject them ; as if I meant to engage you in an unhappy slavery.

The greatest part of mankind are slaves to the world, the flesh, and the devil ; they faithfully obey their laws ; and, by a strange blindness, are so strongly attached to them, that they will not hear of quitting their present slavery to enter into my service : they consider not, that I was content, for their deliverance, to be apprehended, and bound like a notorious criminal. Are not you of that number ? In what manner do you testify your gratitude for this excess of love.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O, my amiable Jesus, what love, what tenderness and gratitude do I owe to you, for having come into the world to break asunder my chains, and deliver me from the miserable captivity of sin ? For this end, you made

yourself a slave in my stead, and willingly charged yourself with my chains ; in like manner as if the son of a great king were to descend from his throne, and make himself a slave, to deliver one of his meanest subjects from the lowest state of oppression.

What can I do for so great a favor ? Make known to me, O amiable Saviour, what you demand of me.

In return, you require of me that I should cease to be a slave to your enemies, in order to become your servant, and that, instead of being swayed by their maxims, I should obey your holy laws. To purchase for me the glorious liberty of being one of your children, you offer to your heavenly Father the chains with which you are loaden ; and you desire that I should offer to you my holy resolutions, as so many chains to bind me fast to your service. Would it not be the most deplorable blindness to refuse you so small a thing, when thereby I procure for myself so great a happiness ? What a satisfaction to think that you offer me so inestimable a favor ! Ah, my God, suffer me not to be so miserable as to abuse your goodness ; suffer me not to be weary of serving so good a master ; nor ever to consent to become any more a slave of the devil and of creatures.

I desire, my divine Saviour, to be yours, and to be ever subject to your laws. O bind my heart so strongly with the chains of your love, that nothing hereafter may any more separate me from you.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

It is not enough to make this resolution : by a holy life thou must evince its sincerity.

What appearance is there that thou hast ever sincerely formed this holy resolution, since thou daily sufferest thyself to be so easily bound in the fetters of sin and of thy passions ?

Thy passions and evil habits are so many chains that fasten thee to the earth : what efforts dost thou make to break them ? Form, therefore holy and fervent resolutions, and be faithful in reducing them to practice.

In particular, resolve to examine thyself seriously, whether thou be not a slave to the world, the flesh, and the devil ; resolve also to labor courageously for the attainment of that holy liberty which belongs to the children of God For this purpose, adopt the following means.

MEANS.

1. To think often of the commandments of God ; examining how you observe them, and whether you fervently comply with the duties which they impose.

2. Frequently and diligently to practise the virtues opposite to your customary vices ; that so you may destroy those bad habits which are the fatal chains that tie you down to the earth.

3. Carefully to avoid bad company, and all the occasions which may betray you into sin ; considering them as so many cords which the devil employs to enslave you.

4. To lead a regular life, and to follow in your daily actions, that plan of conduct which your director shall prescribe.

5. To renew frequently, in the day, the good resolutions which you make in prayer.

SEVENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus abandoned by his Disciples.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

I HAVE disciples who are to fight with me against the world, the flesh, and the devil. The success of this combat depends not on bodily strength, but on the force of my grace and spirit.

My arms are love and patience : these I oppose to the power of my enemies, and they will always prove successful. For this reason, I forbid Peter to make use of his sword in my defence ; I allow also my disciple to forsake me.

I enter alone into the great contest which I have to sustain in my passion : and, if I permit my mother and a few other persons to follow me, it is not with any design that they should oppose my enemies, but that they should share in my sufferings, and even add to them, by the view I have of their sorrows,

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

How forcibly, O my divine Saviour, does your example teach me not to depend on men. To trust in them, is like trusting to a broken reed, as the scripture assures us.

When we enlist in your service, and devote ourselves to you in good earnest, the power, the riches, and resources of men are of no avail, unless you are pleased to make use of them for our benefit, and as means to draw us to you. We are never deceived in our expectations when we place our confidence in you alone. Though abandoned in the greatest necessities by men, we ought interiorly to rejoice that we have no other support to trust in but yourself, and should willingly throw ourselves into your arms, as a child does into the arms of an affectionate mother.

Are we not, therefore, very unjust and unreasonable to murmur and repine as we do, when abandoned by men, since it is then, O my God, that you take us under your special protection?

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Be not, in future, so senseless as to rely on the assistance of men, since, according to the prophet, they are no better than a broken reed, which is more likely to pierce than support the hand which rests on it.

Health, wit, riches, friends, are the things on which the children of the world depend for success in their enterprises: but, exclusive of death, which strips us of them for ever, a quarrel, a disease, an accident, may bereave us of these uncertain helps. Art thou sensible of this great truth? Or art thou of the number of those blind worldlings, who solely depend on perishable things?

The providence of God, his love, and his mercy, are what constitutes the solid and sub-

stantial support of a Christian. Is it upon these divine attributes thou dependest for the success of thy undertakings?

If thou hast been hitherto involved in the general blindness of mankind, so as to trust more in creatures than in God, behold here the means of withdrawing thyself from such unchristian sentiments.

MEANS.

1. In all necessities to have immediate recourse to God.

2. To receive not only with patience, but even with thanksgiving, all the afflictions which befall you in this state of probation.

3. To use the goods you possess, not merely as the fruits of your labor and industry, but rather as the pure gifts of the bounty and liberality of your Creator.

4. Often to reflect, that all the support of men is useless to him whom God abandons; and that, on the contrary, to be forsaken by men for the interest of God, is highly advantageous, since he will never forsake us, unless we first forsake him.

5. Frequently to resolve, never to abandon the service of God, whatever sufferings you may have to undergo on the part of men; remembering these words of our Lord: "Fear not them who kill the body, but cannot destroy the soul; rather fear him who can kill both body and soul, by casting them into hell."

"You will observe many who read much, and search into high and sublime matters, and yet have very little or no devotion to the passion of

Christ. They employ themselves in external cares, and seek comfort in earthly things, and thence their hearts grows dry and senseless within, so that they cannot taste what belongs to Jesus. They are busied about many things, but edified in few. They neglect profitable and necessary things, love subtle things, and despise such as are simple. They are violently carried away towards vanities, and search for novelties, nor yet do they find rest and complete satisfaction in what they hear ; because so long as they seek not Jesus by his cross and passion, they shall not attain to true internal sweetness. More shalt thou find in the wounds of Christ Jesus, than in the possession of the whole world." *A Kempis.*

EIGHTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is dragged through the streets of Jerusalem.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

As love made me choose the cross for the instrument of man's salvation, I feel more ardor to go up to mount Calvary, than my enemies feel to conduct me thither.

Yes, your salvation is extremely dear to my loving heart, and you cannot entertain a doubt of it, if you consider all that I have done for you in the space of thirty-three years. But were my regard for you not a sufficient motive to court sufferings, can you imagine, that I should have hesitated to sacrifice a thousand lives, if necessary, for the glory of my Father ?

Behold the happy time is come for satisfying my zeal and ardent love : now may I say, that my joy is complete.

Follow me, my dearly beloved children ; shew your love by walking after me in the way of the cross, and of sufferings. Cheerfully abandon your soul and body to whatever pains and sufferings my Father shall ordain for you ; it is by suffering with me now, that you may confidently hope, one day, to reign with me in glory.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O wonderful and adorable mystery ! at the very time the soldiers are dragging you to be crucified, your love is fixed on us ; you desire to engage our hearts, that we may reign with you.

While you are the object of the rage and contempt of men, who take pleasure in conducting you publicly to an infamous punishment, you are admired and adored by angels, who consider and accompany you as a victorious king.

From your example, dear Saviour, we may learn justly to appreciate the value of sufferings ; for they are the usual means of drawing us to your service, when other means of tenderness have proved ineffectual.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Be no longer, therefore, so averse to sufferings ; nor so eager to avoid every kind of mortification.

Thy divine Saviour had innumerable angels ready to defend him : he could have destroyed his implacable enemies in a moment, and with the same ease with which he cast them on the ground, when they came to apprehend him.

But he abandons himself to their fury ; he allows himself, without saying a single word, to be dragged through the streets ; because he knows, that by thus yielding to their cruelty, he shall glorify his Father ; satisfy for the sins of mankind ; and procure their eternal salvation.

Is this thy disposition when visited with afflictions, sickness, or disgrace ? Dost thou lovingly submit to the holy will of God ?

Alas ! art not thou in the number of those unhappy persons, who suffer their passions to drag them through the mire of vice and iniquity, whilst Jesus, to deliver thee is dragged by his executioners through the streets of Jerusalem.

1. Firmly resolve, therefore, to make a good use of all the afflictions that may hereafter befall thee.

2. To make a steady resistance to whatever may draw thee into sin.

MEANS.

1. To regard afflictions as the usual means which God employs, to disengage us from the world, and to attach us to himself.

2. Often to think of what our Saviour says, viz. *That the way which leads to life, is narrow, and that few find it.*

3. To look back on your past sins with a full conviction that they deserve more rigorous pu-

nishments, and that it is the effect of God's tender mercy, to chastise you here by temporal afflictions, rather than punish you hereafter in the flames of hell.

NINTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is treated as a blasphemer.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

THE most horrid of all crimes is blasphemy, when a creature arrogantly takes the place of God, and seeks to be acknowledged such by men. With this crime I am charged by my enemies, when they treat me as a blasphemer. To make known the true Deity, I descended upon earth, and they condemned me as an enemy of the Deity.

Adam mistook falsehood for truth; and his posterity, through a still greater blindness, mistake truth for falsehood; for they treat the God of truth as a blasphemer, and reproach him with being an usurper of the divine nature.

What a bitter subject of grief, that I, who came into the world to conduct mankind to heaven, should in consequence of their malice, become to them a stumbling block, and an occasion of scandal.

The example of my enemies and executioners is followed, even to this day, by an infinite number of christians, who in words, acknowledge me for the true God, yet by their actions treat me as a blasphemer. I speak of those who live as if they considered me as a blind God; as an

unjust God, as a false God ; who, in all their actions, are neither influenced by love or by fear.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O my amiable Saviour, did I feel deeply interested for your glory, how ought this injurious treatment to penetrate me with sorrow ! alas ! how many of these blasphemers are to be found among Christians ? How many, by their wicked and scandalous lives, treat you in the same injurious manner ? As Christians, they bear your august name, and yet dishonor it by their pagan conduct ; for they neither fear you, nor love you ; they are void of piety, and are afraid of every little difficulty in the way of virtue.

In this sinful state, they enter your churches ; they rank among your children ; they glory in being associated to the faithful ; they approach even to your sacraments ; and thus profane the most sacred mysteries, by the bad and sacrilegious use which they make of them.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Art not thou one of this unhappy number, and guilty of the same blasphemy ?

Does thy life accord with thy name, and profession ? Thou art a Christian : what can be more glorious ? As such, thou pretendest to be associated with Jesus Christ : what privilege more honorable ? Thou aspirest after the happiness, promised and reserved for those who live as becomes good Christians ; art thou one of this number ?

Reflect seriously on thyself, and resolve,

1. To think often on the lives of good Christians, in order to imitate them ; think also on the lives of bad Christians, to bewail their misery.

2. To avoid evil company, and to seek that which is good.

3. To be truly a Christian ; not in words only, but in thy actions, by conforming thyself to Jesus Christ.

4. After the example of Jesus Christ, to suffer, with great patience and meekness, all calumnies and misrepresentations ; and never to speak ill of thy neighbour.

TENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus during the night is insulted by the soldiers.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

I AM here like a lamb among wolves ; being surrounded by an enraged troop of soldiers, who are eager to vent their fury against me.

My sufferings they make the subject of their amusement ; and nothing is omitted that can add to my torments.

Some buffet me ; others discharge on me their filthy phlegm ; others load me with reproaches and injuries ; and this treatment they continue during a whole night.

In derision they cover me with a veil ; then they strike me, and, to know whether I am a prophet, they demand who it was struck me ? All this I suffer without complaint, and without saying a single word in my defence.

If you consider, that I am your Father, your King, and your God, how shocking will such vile treatment appear! How sensibly will you be affected, if you reflect, that it is purely for the love of you I am exposed to all these outrages?

But this injurious treatment of the Jews is only an image or striking portrait of the outrages, which I still daily receive from sinners; who despise my laws, abuse my graces, profane my sacraments, persecute my disciples, and insolently turn into ridicule whatever is sacred in my church. Who that seriously consider this, can help being penetrated with sorrow for the sins of men; who is not inflamed with zeal to labor for their salvation?

These ungrateful children, these perfidious and wretched Christians, I patiently endure; I suspend the just punishment which they merit, that they may have time and opportunity to be converted, and do penance for their sins.

But if, from my indulgence, they take occasion only to harden their hearts, and encrease the number of their crimes, let them know, that the day of my vengeance will finally overtake them, and when they least expect it. That day will put an end to their malice and iniquity, and overwhelm them with torments, which shall never end.

Have you not reason to fear, lest this misfortune should befall you? What use do you make of the time which I allow you? Is it employed in repairing the disorders of your past life, and in obtaining the forgiveness of your sins?

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O my amiable Redeemer, how incomprehensible is that love, which reduces you to this low and pitiable state in which I now behold you!

To deliver us from the eternal confusion we had merited, must your sacred face, which by its beauty affords joy to the whole court of heaven, be thus disfigured by the phlegm of vile miscreants?

Whilst the angels adore and acknowledge you for their king, you suffer the meanest wretches to be masters of your person, and to offer it every species of insulting violence.

To atone for the sins of so many Christians, who shamefully abandon themselves to every kind of unlawful pleasures, you cheerfully abandon your sacred body, to be treated by the infuriate soldiery in the most injurious manner.

But do you not daily submit to a similar treatment in our churches, when you allow hardened sinners to receive you in the holy communion?

Although you know the malice and corruption of their hearts, you still permit them to profane your sacred body and your adorable blood.

You penetrate their hidden designs, their secret, but shocking intention of soon relapsing into their criminal habits, which, *notwithstanding their repeated promises, they never sincerely renounce.*

You know perfectly well that, in approaching to the holy table, their motive is only to please men, and to avoid being pointed at as scandalous sinners. Nevertheless, O incomprehensible bounty! you permit them, as if they were your

dearest friends, to receive you by the hands of the priest, as you formerly permitted Judas to receive you in company with the other disciples at your last supper.

When I consider how you are treated by profane persons of this description ; when I view them approaching to the sacred table, though guilty of vomiting out the most abominable oaths, curses, and indecent language, they seem to renew all the shocking outrages which you endured in the house of Caiphas, when mocked, buffeted, spit upon, and every way insulted by vile soldiers. O my amiable Saviour, never suffer me to be guilty of a crime so black and abominable !

When I figure to myself a sinner approaching to this august sacrament in the state of deadly sin ; when I see that, notwithstanding the most horrid crimes of blasphemy, swearing, detraction, and impurity, he dares to unite the God of all purity to a body defiled by the basest passions, I easily conceive how heinous must be the crime of an unworthy communion.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

What precautions hast thou hitherto taken in preparing thyself for the holy communion ? Hast thou never received it unworthily ? This may happen either through malice, by communicating without any sincere desire of forsaking thy sins ; through negligence, by not duly purifying thy conscience, and making a good confession.

In receiving this divine sacrament, what has

been thy principal motive? Has it been custom, human respect, to gain esteem, or lest others might entertain a bad opinion of thee?

What fruit hast thou received from thy communions? Art thou less subject to anger, to impurity? Art thou more patient, more resigned under crosses and afflictions?

Art thou less attached to the things of the earth? Are thy thoughts and desires more raised up to heaven?

Art thou more vigilant in resisting thy passions, and the temptations of the enemy? Is thy self-love diminished, and thy love of others increased?

Art thou more intimately united to Jesus Christ? Is thy devotion more fervent? Finally, is thy love of God more perfect and inflamed?

These are the great benefits to be derived from this august sacrament, when received with proper dispositions. Resolve, therefore, to prepare thyself better for these sacred mysteries, than hitherto thou hast done, and rather to die a thousand times, than to profane them by an unworthy communion.

MEANS.

1. NEVER to approach the holy table, but with a pure and perfect intention; such as that of glorifying God, of sanctifying ourselves, of uniting ourselves more perfectly to Jesus Christ, and of disengaging our hearts from whatever is displeasing to him; or with the view of nourishing and strengthening our souls with this life-

giving food, in order to fight courageously against the enemies of our salvation.

2. To consider our heart as the living temple or tabernacle where the King of Heaven is pleased to dwell ; and therefore, to labor by an humble and sincere confession, to purify it from all its defilements.

3. With respect to the number and time of our communions, to follow implicitly the advice of our confessor.

N. B. In order to excite in ourselves proper sentiments of love and respect for these sacred mysteries, it is advisable to read on the eve of our communion this meditation, or that marked for the first day of the month.

ELEVENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is denied by Peter.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

AFFLICTIONS, reproaches, and sorrows, surround me on all sides.

My dearest friends forsake me, and seem even to be leagued with my cruel enemies against me.

One of my apostles betrayed me ; all my disciples abandoned me ; and Peter, whom I made their head, denies me, and thus crucifies my heart, whilst others are preparing to crucify my body.

Three several times he shamefully denies me, and these three denials, like daggers, pierce my very heart.

The love I have for my Father's glory, and the tender affection I bear to this disciple, redoubles my sorrow.

I behold my Father grievously offended, and even by the first of my apostles ; I behold this dear, but unfaithful disciple, become his own and my enemy, and in an instant, deprived of all the rich treasures of grace which he had received. What a subject of bitter grief and sadness to me !

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

It is here, my divine Master, that we learn how great is our weakness, and the necessity of placing our confidence in you alone.

This apostle, whom you so tenderly loved ; whom you had chosen to be the foundation stone of your church ; who professed so much readiness to suffer death for you, becomes at once so feeble, as tamely to yield to the voice of a silly maid.

This dreadful example shows how much we ought to fear the occasions of sin, and with how great instance we should run to you, when assaulted with trials and temptations. St. Peter neglected this precaution, and fell.

Alas ! poor and miserable as we are, we daily imitate him in his weakness, and without the least concern expose ourselves to danger.

Every day at our prayers, we make professions of being ready to die a thousand deaths, rather

than offend you ; and yet, for a momentary pleasure, for a trifling interest, for the sake of pleasing our worldly friends, we violate our promises, and shamefully yield to the temptations of the devil.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

If we may judge from the conduct of sinners, does not each of them say in his heart, what St. Peter said in words, *I know not him of whom you speak ?* Do they not live as if they knew not Jesus Christ ? Art not thou, my soul, of this unhappy number ?

Like this apostle, christians often form good resolutions, and as easily break them : instead of reducing them to practice, when occasions offer, they attend only to their pleasure, or to their interest. Art not thou equally guilty in this point ?

Like this apostle, they also neglect, in the time of temptation, to have immediate recourse to God by fervent prayer ; and, like him, they generally experience the fatal effects of their weakness. Has not this frequently been thy case ? Make, therefore, the following resolutions.

1. To fly all dangerous occasions, and when this is not in thy power, fervently to implore the help of the Almighty.

2. To be more faithful in executing the good resolutions which it shall please God to inspire thee with, relative to thy salvation.

3. To be very diffident of thyself, so as never to be without that filial and reverential fear,

which augments thy confidence in God, and banishes from thy heart every species of presumption.

These are the true means of always persevering in the grace and love of Jesus Christ, and of avoiding the misfortune of those, who, according to St. Paul, profess in words to know God, but deny him by their actions.

TWELFTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is brought before Pilate, and accused by the Jews.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

I COME to guide and comfort you to my Father, but as nothing defiled can appear in his sight, I am willing to shed my blood, in order to purify you from sin, and render you worthy of being presented to him.

As I voluntarily charged myself with your sins, I am content to be led, like an unfortunate criminal, before the tribunal of a wicked judge, in order to undergo the condemnation which you deserved.

Notwithstanding my innocence and sanctity, I am accused and condemned.

If I consider *who* I am, it is a notorious injustice, committed against the Lord of heaven and earth; but if I consider *whom* I represent, viz. sinful man, I submit to the sentence of the

judge, and to the severity of my torments, as justly due.

Sin cannot remain unpunished ; the justice of my Father must be satisfied. But because, without me, you are unable to satisfy his justice, I therefore offer myself an atonement in your place.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

The more, dear Saviour, I apply myself to the consideration of your sufferings, the more I discover the excess of your love.

I should be extremely ungrateful and insensible, were I, after this, to refuse you my heart ; especially when I behold you in this low state, only to make me happy with you in heaven.

Your enemies conduct you bound like a malefactor ; but my sins, and not yours, are the cause of this cruel treatment.

Ah ! can I love you as much as I ought, and contemplate you under these humiliating circumstances, without feeling penetrated with the most lively sorrow ? It is I, O innocent Jesus, it is I, who deserve to be dragged by devils before the tribunal of your Father, to hear pronounced the dreadful sentence which condemns me to eternal flames.

Ah ! most just and awful Judge, I shall never escape this terrible sentence, unless I avail myself of those graces, which in your mercy you are pleased to grant ; unless I cease to love what is sinful ; and, instead of being enslaved to my passions, begin faithfully to serve you for the time to come.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

What wilt thou do, my soul, to avoid falling into this dreadful abyss? Thou must constantly entertain an extreme horror of sin; and after unhappily falling into it, have immediate recourse to the sacrament of penance. In going to this tribunal, consider thyself as a poor culprit cited before his judge; as a criminal that is treated far more favorably than Jesus Christ in his passion.

Jesus is innocent, and he is dragged to the judge as a criminal: his whole life is employed in doing good to others, and by them he is loaded with the greatest crimes. Though constituted by his Father, judge of the living and the dead, he refuses to pass judgment on the guilty; whilst himself, notwithstanding the most perfect innocence, is condemned by the most abominable sinners.

On the contrary, we approach to the sacred tribunal of confession, not to be condemned, but to be justified; not to undergo the just punishment of our crimes, but to receive absolution and pardon.

The sinner humbly acknowledges his faults; with sorrow and confusion he lays open his guilt; and God, by the ministry of his priest, shows him mercy, and restores him again to favor.

Let this tenderness and compassion, on the part of God, excite thee to compunction for thy sins, and move thee affectionately to return to to this Father of mercies.

Delay not to approach to the sacrament of penance, which procures for thee such inestimable benefits. This is the *first* resolution to be taken, the *second* is to approach to this sacrament with a profound *humility*, a sincere *sorrow*, and a great *confidence* in the mercies of God. Behold here the means.

MEANS.

1. To beware of going to confession out of custom, and merely because it is some great festival. Let your motive be to amend your faults, to lead a more regular life, and to enter into the spirit of true repentance for your sins.

2. When you go to the priest, do not content yourself with a slight, superficial view of the sins you have fallen into since your last confession; but examine seriously the state of your soul, and consider also the numberless sins of your past life. This review will dispose you to sentiments of profound humility, and of a hearty and sincere contrition.

3. Submissively attend to what the priest shall prescribe respecting your future conduct, and resolve to follow his advice with the greatest punctuality.

THIRTEENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is mocked by Herod.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

HEROD desires to see me, not with the view of acknowledging, and honoring me, as the true

King of Israel, but merely for the purpose of gratifying his idle curiosity, by beholding a miracle.

On this account, he expresses his obligations to Pilate for the satisfaction of seeing me ; but my silence disappoints his expectations, for I reply not to any of his questions.

He despises me as a fool, arrays me in a gorgeous robe, and, in this state, sends me back to be exposed to the scoffs of my enemies.

Learn hence, that you must sometimes appear foolish in the eyes of men, that you may be esteemed wise according to God ; and that, on many occasions, you must be most reserved, when most pressed to declare your sentiments.

It was easy for me to have replied to Herod's questions, and to have wrought a miracle to please him ; and, had I done so, he might possibly have honored and protected me.

Nevertheless, I said not a word in my defence, or in vindication of my honor. I willingly submitted to all the confusion arising from my silence. Behold the example I have set you : how do you follow it ?

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

* O my God, it is on these, and similar occasions, that your true children are to be known, viz. when, to support your interests, and your religion, they make no account of honor, or of worldly goods. Your servants may feel at a loss for words in their own defence, or they may want power to support their cause ; but you never fail to be their protector, when they forget

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their own interest for the sake of yours, and are ready to sacrifice every thing for your greater honor and glory.

O my divine Master, how few christians are to be found of this description, who prefer your service, your religion, and their eternal salvation to worldly honor and pleasure? Give me grace to be one of this small number of your true and faithful servants.

How many, on the contrary, do we see, who make use of every thing, even of things the most holy, to satisfy their passions, and to please the world? Permit me not, O divine Saviour, to fall into this deplorable blindness. Give me strength and courage, most amiable Redeemer, to despise the false prudence of the world, and to sacrifice my honor, my goods, and my life, in order to advance the interests of your glory.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

We are fools, says St. Paul, *for Christ's sake*. The same may be said by all good christians, who have embraced the folly of the cross. Art thou so happy as to be of this number?

To please all men, and to please Jesus Christ is impossible. *If I sought to please men*, says the apostle, *I should not be a servant of Jesus Christ*. Whom dost thou wish to please in all thy actions?

Is it not better to pass for a fool in the eyes of men, who are blind and corrupted in their judgment, than to be a fool in reality in the eyes of God, and of his holy angels? Art thou sensible of this important truth?

Art not thou of the number of those misguided Christians, who regard the cross and the virtue of it as downright folly, and who love and esteem only the false prudence of the world? **How** often, to please men, hast thou displeased thy God?

Reflect seriously on thyself; and firmly resolve never to seek the vain esteem of men at the expense of God's glory; but to have God only in view in all thy actions. Behold here the means.

MEANS.

1. Often to think on the miserable condition of those who seek only to please men. In serving so many different masters, they can never enjoy any true peace of mind. Mankind are so opposite in their principles and their conduct, that, in pleasing some, we must necessarily displease others. They who attempt to please all, become the slaves of all: every moment they must change their language and their sentiments, in order to conform to the different inclinations of those whom they wish to please. They are given to detraction, to drinking, to voluptuousness, according to the different dispositions of those with whom they associate: thus are they exposed to every sort of vice and corruption.

2. To consider also the happiness of those, who seek only to please God. They are ever content, and experience, even under the most painful crosses and contradictions, a sweetness and tranquillity of mind, which is not to be found in sensual gratifications.

3. To reflect sometimes on the surprise and

consternation of those persons, at the hour of death, who, during life, make it their chief business to please, and to gain the favor of mankind. Reluctantly compelled to appear before the majesty of God, whom they have so much slighted and despised, they will find themselves forsaken and abandoned by the treacherous world to which they are attached.

4. To think, on the contrary, what confidence, joy, and consolation will attend the good, when they are to be separated from their bodies, and from this world, which they esteem so little; in order to go to the eternal enjoyment of God, whom they uniformly endeavor to please, even in their minutest actions.

FOURTEENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is put in competition with Barabbas, who is preferred before him.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

PILATE imagines that he has found out an excellent expedient to effect my deliverance, and this without hazarding the loss of his temporal interests.

He puts me in competition with Barabbas, a notorious malefactor, who is guilty of sedition and murder; and he demands of the Jews, which of the two they will have released at the time of the passover. But he is much disappointed, when he sees that Barabbas is the object of their choice.

Pilate, harassed by remorse of conscience, says to them : " and what shall I do with Jesus ? " They loudly answered : *Let him be crucified.*

Pilate still adds : " But what harm has he done ? " The Jews, without listening to him, cry out still more clamorously : *Let him be crucified.*

Finally, seeing that words were of no avail, he has recourse to an outward ceremony, expressive of the sense which he has of their cruelty. He takes water, and washes his hands before the multitude, saying : " I am innocent of the blood of this just man ; look ye to it. "

But this blind, infatuated people, grow still more hardened, and willingly charge themselves with the whole weight of the crime : " Let his blood say they, " be upon us, and upon our children. "

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

It is here, O my divine master, that we clearly discover the dreadful effects of sin ; how it blinds the understanding, hardens the heart, and vitiates the will.

Your enemies can find no crime in you ; nevertheless, they hate you, and treat you as more criminal than the infamous Barabbas. What blindness !

When desired to assign the motive of their perverse choice, they can give no other reason than the hatred they bear you. What hardness of heart !

To know their design, Pilate asks : " What shall we do with Jesus ? " But they urge him to

release Barabbas, that you may be crucified. What malice, and corruption of the will!

O my Saviour, we see here a lively image of the dreadful disorders which sin produces in the soul, when allowed to reign there for any considerable time. It blinds the understanding, it hardens the heart, and fills it with malice. How ought I to detest it!

We see, that sin still occasions the same disorders in the world. We still observe, that the innocent are treated as criminals, and the vilest characters preferred before true and faithful Christians. Because your children oppose the maxims of the world, and sincerely desire to follow the gospel; hence, they become objects of hatred to the wicked, who frequently persecute them even unto death. Never permit me, O Jesus, to fall into such blindness and hardness of heart.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

O how horrible is mortal sin! we cannot commit it without shamefully preferring Barabbas to Jesus. Hast thou ever yet been sensible of this truth?

An enlightened Christian, who knows what virtue is; who esteems those who practise it; who knows the great evil of sin; and who yet gives it the preference to grace, renders himself guilty of this crime. Has not this been often thy misfortune?

Jesus presents himself at the door of thy heart; for a long time he solicits admission;

and he would willingly, if allowed to enter, take up his residence in thy soul : but the world, thy passions and pleasures, oppose this design, and demand his death. Hast thou faithfully resisted these enemies ?

Thy conscience represents to thee the beauty of virtue, the excellence of grace, and the happiness of possessing Jesus Christ : but thy passions reply : it is better to gratify thyself, and to please the world.

If thou unhappily yield to thy irregular desires, thou abandonest thy amiable Saviour, and givest the preference to Barabbas. Art not thou guilty of this baseness ?

Art not thou of the number of those, who are blinded by the false maxims of the world, or hardened by a long habit of sin ? Art not thou one of those unhappy Christians, who renounce the sanctity of their baptism, to follow a disorderly and profligate life ?

If hitherto thou hast escaped this misfortune, rejoice ; but still be on thy guard, so as to omit nothing to secure thy innocence. Behold here the means to be adopted.

MEANS.

1. To have a great horror of sin, and often to reflect on the dreadful disorders which it occasions.

2. Often to represent to yourself the happiness of possessing Jesus Christ, and the great advantage of renouncing the false pleasures of the world, to enjoy the sweets of his love.

3. On every occasion, to prefer what relates

to the glory of God and the salvation of your soul, before your worldly interest, and the gratification of your senses and passions.

FIFTEENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is scourged.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

PILATE makes a new trial to appease the fury of my enemies; but by an expedient extremely cruel, and such as ought to make your soul thrill with horror.

He orders me to be stripped of my clothes, and tied to a pillar, like an infamous malefactor.

He makes me undergo the most shameful punishment, such as was reserved only for slaves, thieves, and the most notorious criminals.

I am so cruelly scourged, that my blood flows from every part, and my body is all rent and torn.

It is here I submit to a public and bloody penance for your sins. I am fastened to this pillar, that you may be loosed from your crimes. I endure so many heavy stripes, to avert from you the scourges of divine justice.

I abandon my body to the cruelty of the executioners, and allow not the angels who surround and adore me, to restrain, for a single moment, the fury and rage with which they are actuated on this occasion.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O my divine master, what a punishment is this ! What a rigorous penance do you here undergo !

It clearly appears that you are loaded with all our sins, and that this is the punishment which they deserve.

O how horrible ought sin to appear in my eyes, when I behold you in this suffering state, to which sin alone reduces you !

But is it just, that you alone, who are innocent, should bear all the punishment of sin ? Ought we not also to bear our part ?

Must your sacred body be thus mangled and torn for the illicit pleasures in which our bodies have indulged ? Are these instruments of sin to feel no part of the punishment which they have so justly merited ?

O my Lord, how can I behold this innocent mangled body of yours, all covered with blood, by the cruel flagellation inflicted on you, and yet pamper this miserable body of mine, and cherish it with so much tenderness ? Ought I not to abhor my nice sensibility, my want of courage ?

Instead of being animated with a generous ardor to inflict on my guilty body the wholesome rigors of penance, I am alarmed at the least pain that befalls me ; instead of chastening my flesh for the sins into which it has betrayed me, and thus subjecting it to the spirit, I am ready to complain of the least affliction, and till relieved from suffering, am oppressed with sadness and inquietude.

O my God, have pity on the misery and weakness of my soul : strengthen me, O Lord, that I may be willing to do penance for the many and grievous sins I have so unhappily perpetrated.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Thou must suffer with Jesus Christ, if thou desirest to derive any benefit from his torments. The apostle declares, that, if we would reign with Christ, we must first participate in his sufferings.

Begin then to mortify thy passions, which, thou hast hitherto so eagerly gratified ; restrain that inordinate self-love, which makes thee on every occasion consult thy own ease, and the indulgence of thy senses.

These are the scourges which God prepares for thee, and these he will employ to punish thy sins, since thou hast not the courage and zeal to punish them thyself. The most assured means to submit to these scourges without murmuring, is to impose on thyself some penance every day of thy life. It is thus thou wilt learn to receive afflictions with resignation and love.

Resolve, therefore, to practise the following means :

MEANS.

1. Every day to say some prayer, or perform some mortification, with the view of obtaining pardon of your sins.
2. Often to think that you must make atonement for your sins, either in this world or the

next; and that to satisfy for them during the present life, is, of the two, far more advisable, since an aversion to suffering here would expose you to the no small danger of falling into hell. Without mortification, you cannot at least avoid the pains of purgatory; which are, without comparison, far more dreadful than the most austere penances which you can undergo in this world.

N. B.—If, every day, you make a quarter of an hour's meditation on the passion of Christ, offer it to God by way of penance for your sins: it cannot fail of being very acceptable to him, and beneficial to your soul.

SIXTEENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is crowned with thorns, and derided as a mock king.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

I AM truly a king; but, for the love of you, I willingly forego the exercise of my power, and the enjoyment of those honors which are due to me.

You behold in me no signs of royalty, but such as belong to a mock, theatrical king.

I carry a crown, but it is a crown of thorns; I grasp a sceptre, but this sceptre is a reed; and both are given me with the sole view of mocking and deriding my quality of king.

They who ought to have been the first to adore me, become my executioners and scoffers.

To confound, and cure the pride of man, who wished to assume a glory not his own, I demean myself in this manner.

My desire is to make atonement for sinners, who, by their crimes, seek to establish the kingdom of Satan in their hearts, instead of submitting to my just and equitable laws.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O my divine Redeemer, it is here I discover the excess of your love. What more dear to you, than your own honor and glory, which are strictly due to you, and of which no one could absolutely deprive you? Nevertheless, of this honor you make a sacrifice, out of love for me; you strip yourself of glory, in order to clothe me with it.

To raise us to the dignity of princes, you suffer yourself to be treated as a mock king.

This crown of thorns, this sceptre of a reed, will enable me to gain a crown of glory, provided I acknowledge you as the true king of my heart.

But, O my divine Saviour, how ought my heart to be filled with confusion, grief, and bitterness, when I reflect on the share my sins had in placing this ignominious crown upon your head, and this vile sceptre in your hands.

Never permit me, O divine Jesus, to be one of those unhappy sinners, who, like the hard-hearted Jews, mock you, and refuse to own you for their sole and lawful king. They come to adore you in our churches; at the foot of the altar, they style you their king; but, alas! they

are scarcely returned home to their families, when their conduct betrays their hypocrisy, and, at the first opportunity, they are ready to undervalue and insult your dominion.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Art thou duly sensible, my soul, that such is the horrible nature of wilful sin? Whoever is guilty of it, becomes a scoffer and false worshipper of Jesus Christ: yes, this is the unhappy case of all those who fall into mortal sin. They shamefully crucify Jesus in their hearts, after receiving him there in quality of their king. This often proceeds from the vain fear of human respects.

Art not thou of this number? If such be thy misfortune, consider attentively, that, without true repentance, eternal confusion awaits thee in the flames of hell. Such will be the inevitable punishment of those who are now enslaved to the false and momentary glory of this world.

But if, on the contrary, thou be willing to partake of the thorny crown of thy divine master, thou hast reason to rejoice; for certainly it is a great happiness to be despised here with Jesus, for a moment, in order to reign hereafter with him eternally in glory.

Resolve, therefore, always to acknowledge, and faithfully to serve Jesus Christ, as the sole and true king of thy heart, and rather to die a thousand times, than to fall into mortal sin.

MEANS.

1. To perform all your prayers, and all your religious actions with great attention, with a

lively faith, and a sincere piety. Thus shall you be of the happy number of those true christians, who adore God in *spirit* and *truth*, and not merely with their lips, and in outward show.

2. To proclaim and promote, as much as lies in you, the glory and sovereign greatness of Jesus Christ crucified; and never speak of him but with love and respect.

3. Faithfully to offer him all the honor and glory of your actions; ardently wishing, that in you, and by you, he may ever be exalted as he deserves.

4. To desire and often beg of Jesus Christ, that he would give you strength and courage to suffer whatever may be for his glory: that so you may not be one of those delicate and effeminate members, of whom St. Bernard complains, as highly unbecoming a head crowned with thorns.

SEVENTEENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is mocked and buffeted.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

Now may I say with truth, as was foretold by one of my prophets, that I am the reproach of mankind, and the outcast of the people.

The greatest criminal was never treated with equal barbarity and ignominy.

I am interrogated as a guilty wretch; the most horrid crimes are laid to my charge; I am traduced as a blasphemer, a seducer, a magician; as an impious disturber of the public peace.

They spit in my face, buffet me, and derive pleasure from the most inhuman cruelties of my enemies.

I suffer all this without murmuring, and even with joy, to convince you how much sin deserves to be punished, and how tenderly I have loved you.

After this, can you refuse to suffer for my glory any affronts, how great soever they may appear? Can you refuse to pardon your enemies, whatever ill treatment you may have received at their hands?

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

When I consider you, O my divine Saviour, in this pitiable and ignominious state, the most lively sorrow should fill my soul.

Is it possible, that the most innocent, the most holy of men, he who is both God and man, should be treated with so much cruelty and disgrace? This cannot, my amiable Saviour, be called in question, since the gospel is my voucher.

You are accused, and interrogated; they strike you in the face; they treat you as a vile and abominable wretch—*you*, who are innocence, justice and sanctity itself—*you*, who are our King, our Saviour, our Judge, and our God.

Had not your ardent love, O divine Jesus, restrained the just resentment of creatures, that you might suffer the more for our salvation, would not all of them have risen up unanimously against these impious wretches, and demanded vengeance on them for inflicting so many torments and outrages on you?

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

What are thy sentiments, my soul, in contemplating this tragical and surprising spectacle? Canst thou forbear loving him, who has so lovingly suffered all this complication of pains for thy sake?

Is not this great example sufficient to cover thee with confusion; to suppress every whisper of complaint when despised; and to extinguish all resentments, all desires of revenge, even under the heaviest provocations: especially if thou reflect that, besides being born in sin, thou hast ungratefully offended thy good God, in return for all the benefits he has bestowed upon thee?

Nevertheless, is it not true, that the slightest word, or the least mark of contempt, offends thy pride, and fills thy heart with disquietude?

Whilst thou art so sensible to the least imaginary affront, so impatient of injuries, how canst thou glory in being the member of a head, thus cruelly tormented and disfigured by the executioners?

Make, therefore a firm resolution, 1. To suffer patiently, after the example of Jesus Christ, and for his greater glory, whatever contempt and injuries may befall thee. 2. Never to take occasion from the corporal or mental defects of thy neighbour, to mock and ridicule him; and, if possible, prevent others from doing so in thy presence.

MEANS.

1. Often to think that the humiliations and reproaches which the just patiently suffer at present, will soon pass away, whilst the glory which awaits them hereafter, will remain for ever. On the other hand, to remember that the vain honors and false glory of the world will vanish like smoke, and disappear in a moment, to be followed by confusion and ignominy, never to have an end.

2. Often to enter into yourself, to discover your own defects and weaknesses; for did we impartially view ourselves, without flattery, we should discover in our hearts so much evil, and so many subjects of contempt, as to feel little disposed to pry into the failings of others, or make them the subject of our raileries.

3. When we hear a person ill-spoken of, or ridiculed in our presence, we must not join in such uncharitable proceedings, but rather show our displeasure in the most prudent manner. In these circumstances, we should reflect how we may charitably perform, in favor of our neighbour, what, on a similar occasion, we might wish him to perform in our own behalf.

EIGHTEENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is presented to the People.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

IN vain Pilate endeavors to soften the hearts of my enemies; they are not to be moved; so inveterate is their hatred.

He exhibits me to the people, crowned with thorns, covered with a vile garment, my body all torn, and disfigured with blood ; and in this lamentable state, he says to those who demanded my death : *Behold the man* ; I bring him here before you, that you may know that I find in him no cause of death.

Oh strange hardness of the human heart ! all this only serves to increase the fury of my enemies, and to make them cry out with greater animosity : *Crucify him, crucify him.*

But can you remain unmoved, who know that I am reduced to this pitiful state only for the love of you ? Can you still continue to offend me ?

Behold the man, who has loved you so much ; can you continue to insult him by your crimes ?

Behold the man, who has done and suffered so much for you ; and have you hitherto done or suffered any thing for him ?

Behold the model, given you by my Father : by this you will be examined at the day of judgment. What resemblance can you pretend, unless you change your life ?

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

I hear you, O my divine master ; I know your voice, my amiable pastor ; and from all your wounds, as from so many eloquent mouths, I learn the tenderness of your love for me.

O how ungrateful am I ! For what have I hitherto done to testify the sincerity of my love, and evince that you possess the full extent of my heart ?

Why have I not done for you what you have so generously done for me ? Why is not

my body covered with wounds for your glory, as yours was for my salvation ?

It is but just, at least, that I should patiently and meekly suffer the pains and miseries of this life, in imitation of that patience and meekness with which you endured so much for my salvation.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Behold the man of sorrows ! behold, my soul, thy divine pastor ! what a happiness to be in the number of his sheep !

Behold him whom the church may truly call a *bloody spouse*, since he has shed his blood to wash our souls, and espouse them to himself.

Behold thy Lord, and thy God, who has reduced himself to this low state, in order to gain thy heart, and draw thee to himself.

Consider how he is overwhelmed with sadness ; laden with reproaches, covered with wounds ; oppressed with sorrow. In this state, he says to thee in the most loving manner : *My son, give me thy heart.* Canst thou refuse it me ? No longer offend me by wilful sin. Wilt thou be base enough to return to thy criminal disorders ? Love me, and never forget what I have done for thee. After this, is it possible that thou shouldst go on in thy insensibility and ingratitude ?

Resolve, therefore, in future, to live like a true and sincere christian, or follower of Christ. Behold here the means.

MEANS.

1. Think often that Jesus is the model by which you must regulate your life, and that his

Father presents him to you as such, saying : *Behold the man*, whom you ought to imitate.

2. Before you begin any action of importance, consider how Jesus would have acted on such an occasion, and undertake nothing without desiring to walk in his footsteps, by an imitation of his virtues.

3. In a spirit of modesty, mortify your senses, according to the exact rules of temperance.

4. Shew great tenderness and compassion for the poor, and those who suffer ; on these occasions, say to yourself : Behold here an image of my Saviour Jesus Christ in his suffering state.

NINETEENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is condemned to Death.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

THREE different sorts of persons condemn me to death, and from motives equally different. My heavenly Father requires that I drink the bitter chalice of my passion, in order to repair his injured glory. His love of justice, and of man's salvation, makes him pronounce this sentence.

Pilate condemns me to die on a cross, for no other reason than the fear of involving himself in difficulties, should he refuse to satisfy the rage and envy of my enemies.

Sinners pronounce against me the same condemnation, and force me to undergo the same torments, when, by sin, they basely and ungratefully deprive me of that spiritual life which

I possess in their souls ; and this from no other motive but that of enjoying their pleasures, and gratifying their passions.

The third and last condemnation I view in a very different light from the two former. The first I receive with the most profound respect ; I submit to it with love. The second, which Pilate pronounces, I suffer without resistance, and without saying a word in my defence : but the third, which cruelly tears from me those souls which I had purchased with the effusion of my blood, will ever be to me most afflicting and intolerable.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

I easily conceive, dear Lord, that you accept with love and submission the sentence of your Father ; that you also suffer that of Pilate with joy and pleasure, in order to consummate the work of our redemption, But were you still capable of sorrow, how excessive must be your affliction, when condemned to die in those hearts into which you entered, to live and reign there eternally ; in those hearts for which you were pleased to suffer the most cruel of deaths !

How justly, therefore, ought we, O adorable Jesus, to bewail our faults all the days of our life, in order, by tears, to efface the fatal sentence which we have unhappily pronounced against you, as often as we have banished you from our hearts by mortal sin ?

If ever then I have been so miserable as to consent to mortal sin, (which I have too much reason to believe, or at least to apprehend,) this ought to be to me a subject of grief as long as I live.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

May Jesus for ever live in the midst of my heart : may Jesus for ever live in the hearts of all men. This is what I will always proclaim in future ; this is the sentence which I will ever pronounce.

What wilt thou do, my soul, that Jesus may live and reign in all places ? What oughtest thou not to undertake to propagate his kingdom in all hearts ?

What he requires of thee, is to pronounce sentence of condemnation and death against thy own passions ; against thy bad habits, and, generally, against whatever thou knowest to be displeasing to him.

That Jesus may live in thee for ever, thou must die daily to the outward and carnal man.

Let us, therefore, die to ourselves ; let us die to the world, to the flesh, and to the senses. But how is this to be effected ? These are the means.

MEANS.

1. To renounce and separate ourselves, as much as may be, from sensual pleasures, and from all that may attach us to the world. In this consists the true mortification of the heart.

2. Often to think on death.

3. To have frequent recourse to confession, the better to dispose ourselves for receiving the holy sacrament of the altar ; for this is the sovereign means to unite us most perfectly with Jesus Christ, and to disengage our affections from perishable creatures.

TWENTIETH MEDITATION.

Jesus is delivered up to the Executioners.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

THEY finally abandon me to the fury of the executioners, who, like so many ravenous wolves, are ready to devour me.

Nothing now prevents them from satiating their cruelty; I resign myself into their hands, as a victim, to be immolated for your salvation.

I am all meekness, nor do I avail myself of my innocence, or perform any miracle to deliver myself out of their hands. It is necessary that I should die for you, and consummate the great work of my love.

As a meek lamb, I am going to be immolated on the cross, in order to bring back so many poor sheep who have unhappily gone astray.

But what afflicts me is, that there are so many of these strayed sheep that pay no regard to my loving kindness, nor deign even to listen to my voice. Are not you of this number? Have you ever given yourself to me wholly and without reserve? And do you now acknowledge me for the true pastor of your soul? To this title I have an undoubted claim.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

Yes, divine Saviour, it is now you make it appear that you are truly the charitable shepherd of our souls. The good pastor, you have told us, gives his life for his sheep, and this is what you now do, when, with so much love, you abandon yourself into the hands of the executioners.

You have sacrificed your precious life for all strayed sheep : O how just is it that they should faithfully endeavor to correspond with so great a favor, by returning back to the fold.

But it is a truth, too evident to be called in question, that the world is full of unhappy sheep, who wander from your fold ; who are unwilling to hear your voice, or avail themselves of that happiness which you have purchased for them at the expence of your blood. Alas ! they are blinded to that degree, as to be passionately in love with their misery.

Ah ! my amiable shepherd, am not I at present one of that number ? At least, has it not formerly been my misfortune ? May thy mercy, sweet Lord, prevent me, in future, from ever more going astray from thee.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

What wilt thou do in order to prove thyself a faithful sheep of this amiable shepherd ? Does he require that thou be delivered up to the executioners for his sake, as he was for thine ?

O how much more favorable is thy lot ! How wonderful is the love of my Saviour ! For us sinners Jesus abandons himself to the executioners ; he suffers in our place. But then, in consequence of such love, and of our deliverance from the worst of evils, he expects that we should offer him at least our hearts, and resign ourselves to his blessed will.

Dost thou hesitate, miserable soul, to give thyself wholly to this amiable pastor, that, by his grace, he may deliver thee from the fury of thy passions, which, like so many cruel executioners, would inevitably hurry thee to eternal death.

Resolve, therefore, vigorously to combat thy passions, and principally, that which causes thee oftenest to fall into sin, and thus unhappily separates thee from thy divine Saviour.

MEANS.

1. Often to examine what passions chiefly prevail over us, and to exercise ourselves in acts of the contrary virtues.

2. To remember in this important combat, only those who do violence to themselves, can gain the victory, and secure the eternal recompence prepared for them who conquer.

3. To dread our passions as the most dangerous enemies, and often to consider them as so many executioners that betray us to the devil.

4. Let us beg fervently of God that he would never suffer us to be abandoned to the fury of our passions ; but that he would strengthen us by his grace, to overcome these enemies of our salvation, and subject them to the yoke of his divine law.

TWENTY-FIRST MEDITATION.

Jesus carries his Cross.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

I AM so weakened by the loss of blood, and by the dreadful torments which, day and night, they inflict upon me, that unless my love supported me, I might easily avoid the pain and ignominy of crucifixion prepared for me, by dying under the weight of the cross, which they compel me to carry.

The rage of my enemies is such, that they are not content with nailing me to the cross : as if this were too slight a punishment, they load me with the heavy and frightful instrument of my death, which they oblige me to carry from Jerusalem to Mount Calvary. In general, the greatest criminals meet with compassion, and the instrument of their death is concealed from their view ; but it is not so in my regard.

Be assured, however, that the weight of my cross is not so oppressive as the weight of your sins, and with these I willingly charge myself for your sake.

Cease then to offend me, and remember that, if any one will come after me, *he must deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me.*

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O divine master, where shall we go, if we are not so happy as to follow you ; what will become of us, if we are so miserable as to refuse to tread in your footsteps ?

Are not you the *way, the truth, and the life* ? Whoever, therefore, withdraws himself from you, must necessarily go astray, be led into error, and finally perish.

O sovereign truth, thou alone teachest the true way to eternal life ; I desire to follow thee in whatever way thou art pleased to conduct me : but first, by thy powerful grace, strengthen my weakness, and enable me, by the force of love, to overcome all remissness.

I confess, my God, that I feel a repugnance to carry the cross, which, in thy mercy, thou art pleased to lay on me. This cross is extremely

light when compared with thine ; but nevertheless, instead of embracing it, I often fly from it, or at least drag it after me, with the greatest reluctance, till an opportunity offers of wholly disengaging myself from it.

My amiable Jesus, when shall I joyfully embrace the cross which you have prepared for me ? Oh ! inflame my heart with that sacred fire of divine love, which gave you so much courage and strength to bear your painful cross. Then shall I esteem the cross as my glory and happiness ; then shall I bear it cheerfully after you ; suffer myself to be nailed to it, and contentedly die in its embraces.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

The crosses, prepared for thee, are the afflictions, the maladies, the pains and miseries of this life ; the temporal concerns of thy family ; the laborious and painful occupations of thy state ; the disagreeable humor of the person whom thou servest, or by whom thou art served ; this or that humiliation which befalls thee, together with all the unpleasant circumstances to which thou art daily exposed in thy intercourse with the world. All these things, whether singly or collectively, make up the cross which thou art compelled to carry.

The slaves of the devil have equally their crosses with the servants of Jesus Christ. The difference is, that the latter carry their cross without murmuring, and even with joy, from the consideration that it renders them conformable to their divine master here, and affords them the hope of eternal felicity with him here-

after : whereas the slaves of the devil reluctantly drag their cross after them, without the least prospect of advantage to be derived from it ; moreover, they live in the continual fear of exchanging their temporal cross for one that is eternal, and which, of course, must involve them in eternal despair.

Resolve, therefore, my soul, to bear with courage and resignation the cross which God lays on thee ; and, for this end, make use of the following means.

MEANS.

1. On all occasions, submit yourself humbly to the dispensations of divine providence.

2. Often consider the enormity of your sins, and how much you have deserved to suffer on their account.

3. Consider not so much the weight of the cross and your own weakness, as the unction which Jesus Christ attaches to the cross, and the powerful grace which he always communicates to those who desire to bear it with love.

4. Often to reflect on that gracious promise which Christ makes by the mouth of his apostle, that, if we are the companions of his sufferings, and of his cross, we shall also be partakers with him of his consolations, and of his glory.

TWENTY-SECOND MEDITATION.

Jesus, in the way to Mount Calvary, meets his blessed mother.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

It is in the way of the cross that all my true friends must seek me, and there they will infal-

libly find me : there needs no other proof than the example of my mother.

In seeking me in the way of Mount Calvary, she meets me with my cross ; she follows after, all-penetrated with grief, and desirous to ease me of the heavy load which oppresses me.

This shews, that my best friends participate most with me in my cross, and most readily accompany me in the ways of Mount Calvary.

Learn hence, how remote those persons are from the path I chose, who seek merely their own satisfaction here on earth, and will hear of nothing but peace and pleasure. Persons of this character are in a most dangerous way ; for though it may appear safe to the generality of mankind, it frequently conducts them to eternal misery.

Whoever desires to partake with me in the triumph of my cross, and to enjoy with me everlasting felicity, let him first faithfully seek me in the ways of the cross.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

I perfectly understand, O amiable Saviour, that you are not to be found in the pleasures, the vanities, and the honors of this world, but in the midst of sufferings, humiliations, disappointments, and the vexatious occurrences of life.

Alas ! were I duly convinced of this important truth, my conduct would be very different under the pressure of sufferings.

On such occasions, I should raise up my heart to you, and most lovingly cry out : I have found my Jesus, laden with his cross ; I will

most willingly carry it with him. 'This is what you expect from all your true children.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Hast thou not observed, my soul, how many good christians suffer in meekness and peace, who are naturally as tender and delicate as thyself? Hast thou not often admired this edifying conduct in the many martyrs, confessors, and virgins, who have courageously undergone the most cruel torments, and cheerfully submitted to the most rigorous penances?

They previously prepared themselves, during a considerable time, by subduing their passions, by frequenting the sacraments, and by the assiduous exercise of fervent prayer. In like manner do thou faithfully apply thyself to these christian duties.

How different is thy conduct from theirs! Instead of making a holy use of these trials, thou abandonest thyself to complaints, murmurings, and dejection, under the smallest affliction that befalls thee.

The reason is, thou dost not prepare thyself for suffering before hand; it would seem, as if thou considered thyself wholly exempt from affliction. But what blindness is this! Art thou ignorant that suffering is the lot of all men, but especially of Christ's friends and servants? If God sometimes leaves sinners in the prosperous enjoyment of their riches, honors, and pleasures, it is frequently to punish them for their wicked lives: for worldly prosperity precipitates them still deeper into sin, whereas, suffering might, perhaps, have awakened them to a sense

of their duty, and been the occasion of their conversion. Unless thou have recourse to Jesus Christ, the cross will always appear to thee insupportable, but if thou affectionately unite thyself to thy suffering Lord, he will enable thee to bear thy cross with patience and resignation.

Art thou rightly sensible that, without Jesus, the smallest pain is sufficient to deject thee; and that, with his grace, thou canst do all things in him who strengtheneth thee?

Resolve, then, under all the afflictions of this life, frequently to recur to this amiable Saviour for relief. This is the sovereign means to alleviate all thy crosses, and to render them useful and subservient to thy salvation.

Resolve to forego, as much as possible, the vain pleasures of this life, and every day contentedly to suffer something for Jesus Christ, that, at the hour of death, thou mayest be found in his company, in the royal highway of the cross.

MEANS.

1. Often to think on Jesus crucified, in order to acquire the habit and facility of having immediate recourse to him in the time of need.

2. When obliged to partake of some pleasure, be on your guard, lest your heart be too much attached to it; and this is to be observed, however innocent the pleasure may appear.

3. Never to pass a day without offering some violence to your inclinations, and without putting some restraint on your looks, words, or actions; for it is thus we shall find ourselves in the road to Mount Calvary, and in company with Jesus carrying his cross.

TWENTY-THIRD MEDITATION.

Jesus is stripped of his clothes, and extended naked on the Cross.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

Now is accomplished in my regard, what had been foretold by one of my prophets : *I am a worm, and no man, the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people.*

I came into the world as a public victim, to be immolated for the salvation of mankind.

On this account, I am content to be separated from my relations, my disciples, and my friends ; I submit to be stripped of my goods, my honors, and of my very garments.

My life is all that remains, and this is soon to be taken from me ; for I willingly make a sacrifice of it to deliver you from death.

I am going to die ; I shall meet death with joy and alacrity : but, notwithstanding the greatness of my love, I feel an extreme reluctance to be stripped, and exposed naked to the sight of the whole world.

This horrible confusion which I suffer is, infinitely more distressing than all I endure from the cruelty of my executioners, and the hard wood of the cross.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

In what a strange state do I behold you, O my divine Saviour ! The king of heaven and earth, from whom is derived whatever is good, is deprived of all things, and exposed naked on the cross.

I am perfectly sensible, O Lord, that sin is the fatal cause of all this, and that it daily produces the same effects in our souls as it did on your body. It is sin which causes that horrid nakedness of sinners, and disqualifies them from appearing in your presence : it is sin which strips them of your grace, of your love, of virtue, and of all that is good.

To be condemned to suffer the shame of that nakedness, to which you, O divine Jesus, were exposed, would appear to us insupportable ; and yet it is only the figure and shadow of that far worse nakedness, which we bring upon ourselves by wilful sin.

Alas ! how great is our blindness ! If any unexpected event, or unsuccessful lawsuit, deprive us of part of our temporal goods, or of our reputation, we feel it most sensibly, and become almost inconsolable ; but, if the devil rob us of the treasure of grace, by drawing us into sin, we are unconcerned at the loss, as if no evil had befallen us.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Art not thou of the number of those souls which are insensible to all that relates to their salvation ; which are plunged and buried in the love of temporal and earthly goods ; and which never think of acquiring spiritual and heavenly riches ? Such souls are truly miserable, and extremely to be pitied, however rich and happy they may appear in the possession of worldly goods, and the enjoyment of a false and deceitful tranquility. Art not thou fallen into this blindness ?

At death thou wilt be convinced, though unfortunately too late, that all temporal goods are insufficient to enrich the soul, and render her happy. However worldlings may flatter themselves at present, they will shortly see themselves reduced to a horrible and disgraceful nakedness, before the tribunal of God. Hast thou not reason to apprehend, lest this prove thy misfortune?

The proud will also learn, and to their no small surprise, that whilst they have been so attentive to decorate the body, with vain, sumptuous, and expensive dresses, they have clothed their souls only with crimes and maledictions. Art not thou guilty of this inconsistency?

To avoid being of the number of such unfortunate souls, thou must in future think seriously of disengaging thyself from the vain goods of this life, and labor incessantly to enrich thyself with the solid treasures of grace and virtue.

Resolve, therefore, to conceive a great esteem of spiritual goods, to seek after them earnestly, and to disengage thyself entirely from the love of temporal things. For this purpose, make use of the following means.

MEANS.

1. Consider riches as a garment which you must soon put off, and perhaps much sooner than you imagine. In the evening, when you put off your clothes, entertain yourself with this salutary thought.

2. Have a greater concern for your soul than for your body, and, on all occasions, prefer spiritual to temporal goods.

3. Often think on death : this thought will thoroughly convince you, that whatever may be acquired, or possessed here, is but an atom, if compared to the good things of eternity.

4. Beg earnestly of God, that he would perfectly disengage your soul from all inordinate attachment to the perishable things of this world.

O Jesus, crucified for the love of me, receive my heart, and kindle in it the fire of your love.

TWENTY-FOURTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is fastened to the Cross.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

MOUNT Calvary is the place that I have chosen to combat your enemies ; cruel nails and a disgraceful cross are the arms which I employ against them, in order to deliver you from their slavery.

Behold the extent of my love : after this, can you refuse to love me ?

This cross I have preferred to all the thrones of kings ; this I have ardently desired ; this I have eagerly sought after : yes, I have joyfully embraced it, and have been immolated thereon for your salvation, in the hope that you would also, in return, make a ready sacrifice of yourself to my honor and glory. Have you done it ?

This cross is the bed of sorrow on which I bring forth my elect ; it is the august chair from which I give them lessons of salvation ; it is the precious inheritance which I leave them ; it is

like the secret closet where I open my heart to them ; it is the sacred ladder by which they ascend to the seat of glory. What esteem have you for the cross ? what benefit do you derive from it ? do you often reflect on my sufferings ? do you strive to imitate them ?

Consider that I suffer my hands and feet to be nailed for your sake, that they may become the sources of grace and benediction. Why, then, do you fly from me by a sinful life ? why do you not run to the foot of my cross, to mingle your tears with my blood, and thus form a salutary bath to wash away your sins ?

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

It is on this throne that I acknowledge you, O my divine Saviour, for the true and only king of my heart ; it is here you have gloriously triumphed ; it is here you still continue to reign triumphant.

If we expect to come to you, and to arrive at your glory, it must be by the cross. Yes, my God, with the sacred cross you have traced out the road which conducts to life : but, alas ! how far am I removed from this happy way, since the least sufferings are sufficient to discourage me, and to fill my mind with trouble.

This cross, though bedewed with your blood, and therefore now full of unction, appears still like a dreadful gibbet : instead of receiving and embracing it, as the precious pledge of your love, I reject it when offered, and fly it, as the criminal does the place of execution.

With extreme confusion, I confess, O dear Redeemer, the excess of my weakness and timi-

dity. Be you my strength, and draw me by your grace ; let me be so fastened to your holy cross by love, as never more to be disengaged from it ; in company with you, my crucified Lord, may I have the happiness to live and die in its embraces.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Look up to Mount Calvary, and, with the eyes of faith, behold Jesus Christ exposed there by his eternal Father, as the great pattern of Christians. Thou must endeavor, therefore, to imitate this model, set before thee, if thou desire to be of the number of those happy souls that are destined to glory. The apostle has expressly declared : *that God has predestinated them to become conformable to the image of his Son.*

There is no other way to enter heaven, than by the way of the cross. Art thou sincerely disposed to embrace it, and to make use of it as the only instrument of securing thy salvation ?

Thou must be nailed to the cross with Jesus Christ. The mysterious nails, to be employed for this purpose, are faith, hope, and charity. Resolve, therefore, in good earnest, to overcome thy great repugnance to the cross, and be diligent in making use of the following means.

MEANS.

1. Often to beg of God, that he would prepare your heart for sufferings, and give you strength and courage to make a proper use of them.

2. To reflect that, in quality of sinners, you must necessarily expect to suffer, and that it is

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much better to undergo sufferings in this life than in the next.

3. To consider the great rewards, prepared for those who suffer with love and affection.

4. To compare your sufferings with those which your amiable Saviour endured in his passion.

5. From the sufferings of Christ, you may derive great consolation, not only under private afflictions, but in public and general calamities. However great these may be, and deserving of compassion, they are not to be compared with what the Son of God endured when covered with reproaches, and nailed to a cross by his own creatures. When Rome, the capital of the universe, was taken and pillaged by the Goths, a general consternation spread itself through the empire, and the most tender feelings were excited in the minds of all who heard of the disorders occasioned by those barbarians. Africa was equally affected with the other provinces, and St. Augustine, not less distinguished for his compassionate heart, than for his sublime genius, felt on this occasion the most lively emotions of sorrow. But see how he comforts himself and his people in a discourse, which he made on that important event: "Jesus Christ," says he, "the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, " was taken, bound, scourged, exposed to every " species of insult and disgrace. He was suspended on a tree; he was nailed to a cross, " and died upon it in the greatest torments. " Now make the comparison between Jesus " Christ and Rome: compare Jesus Christ with " all the earth; let heaven as well as earth be

“ placed in the balance with Jesus Christ. What
“ are all creatures, when compared with their
“ Creator? Can any comparison be made be-
“ tween them? Nevertheless, he, though Lord
“ of all, was accounted as nothing; he was
“ treated as the outcast of the world by those
“ who crucified him.” St. Aug. de Urbis ex-
cidio. n. 9. It is by similar views we are to
support and console ourselves under the various
changes and revolutions which spread terror
and desolation through the world. Whatever
is temporal, deserves not to be the object of
any lasting sorrow. After the ignominies and
sufferings of Christ, we should be surprised at
nothing that happens; and the example of his
patience and humiliation should soon dry up
our tears.

TWENTY-FIFTH MEDITATION.

Jesus elevated on the Cross.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

How different are my ways from the ways of
men! My executioners, after nailing me to the
cross, raise me up in the air, to make known to
the world my ignominious treatment: but in so
doing, they proclaim my true glory, which con-
sists in triumphing over the hearts of men by the
greatness of my sufferings.

They expose me in this manner, to excite
against me the hatred and contempt of all men,
and this very humiliation I willingly choose, as
the means of attracting the hearts of all men.

For, as the eagle of the New Testament, I raise my children to this point of elevation, in order to conduct them to heaven.

Be assured that this is owing to my love, more than to the cruelty of my executioners: I suffer myself to be thus elevated on the cross, that all may be invited to come to me, and that the lost sheep may more easily hear the voice of their Pastor.

It is here my disciples may learn the little esteem they ought to have for worldly dignities, and how readily they ought to participate of my cross. To this elevation they should aspire.

It is by the cross I choose to reign on earth; by the cross I overcame my enemies; by the cross I appeased the anger of my Father; from the cross I derive my glory.

The cross is also the portion of my beloved children; by the cross, and on the cross, they will always triumph over their enemies, and be enabled truly to reign. Have you the happiness to be of this number? Are you ambitious of no other elevation, but what is derived from the cross?

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

It is in this state, divine Saviour, that I consider you as a divine loadstone, capable of attracting hearts the most obdurate, and steeled to every pious emotion. Shall I be so insensible as to resist your attractive charms?

It is our duty to follow you; you desire it; you invite us; and you are ready to assist those who undertake it. Why have I so long delayed to partake of this happiness?

Alas ! my divine Master, when shall I be able to say with your apostle : *God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I clearly perceive the deplorable blindness of mortals, in establishing their glory and dignity in such frivolous things as the vain and transitory honors of the world, whilst they neglect that true and solid glory which you offer, and which will remain for ever.

Draw me, O Lord, by your love ; let your powerful grace disengage my heart from all creatures, that with you I may now be elevated on the cross, in order to reign with you eternally hereafter.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

To be attached with Jesus to the cross, is the only true and solid elevation of a christian.

In proportion as thou art despised by men, and depressed by poverty and suffering, so much the more wilt thou be elevated in the sight of God.

O how advantageous is it to appear little and humble among men, that in heaven we may be eternally great and elevated among the angels ! O how vain is all that worldly grandeur, which renders us contemptible in the eyes of God !

Art thou not puffed up with ideas of thy own exaltation ; and excessively fearful of whatever may depress thee in the estimation of men ?

It is the character of worldlings, to be ever seeking to raise and advance themselves in the eyes of men, even to the prejudice of their eternal salvation.

But the character of Christ's disciples is, to humble themselves in all things, and carefully to fly the vain honors of the world. H 2

Thus are the maxims of Jesus Christ quite opposite to those of the world, and of course, his disciples have sentiments very different from those of worldlings. Art thou not disposed to embrace the sentiments of thy Redeemer, and faithfully to observe them to the last moment of thy life?

Resolve therefore: 1. To entertain a great esteem for all those crosses and sufferings which it shall please God to send thee, since they are designed to elevate thee to himself. 2. Wholly to disengage thy heart from the vain honors of this world. 3. No longer to nourish that nice sensibility, that excessive aversion to every species of contempt. In order to this, practise the following means:

MEANS.

1. To represent to yourself the terrible humiliations, and eternal scoffs, which the damned will hereafter undergo, in exchange for the vain, momentary honors of this world.

2. Often to think on that eternal weight of glory which is prepared for those who are willing to be despised for the love of Jesus.

3. To rest assured, that sufferings and humiliations are the most effectual means to disengage our hearts from creatures, and unite them closely to God.

4. Ardently to beg God's grace, that you may be duly convinced of, and fully penetrated with this important truth, so little attended to by the generality of mankind.

TWENTY-SIXTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is blasphemed on the Cross.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

To the numerous wounds, inflicted on me, the Jews add insult and blasphemy. They place me between two thieves, and one of them addresses me in an insolent and blasphemous manner: "*If thou be the Christ, save thyself, and us also.*"

The soldiers and people rejoice to see me in this state, and the passengers say to me with contempt: "Thou that pretendest to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, descend from the cross."

The high-priests, the scribes, and the ancients, mock at me in like manner, and say among themselves: "He saved others, and he cannot now save himself. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in him. He put his confidence in God; if God love him, he will deliver him, for he said, I am the Son of God."

Such are the consolations which they offer me amidst all my sufferings. It is now I can say with truth, that I drink the chalice of my passion, and that I drink it to the very dregs, filled as it is, with the gall of your sins.

If you desire to live in a christian manner, and undertake any thing for the glory of my Father, you must expect to meet with persons adverse to your designs, ready to censure your conduct, and to expose it to ridicule; but be

faithful, and these reproaches will make but little impression on your heart : they will only serve to enhance your merit.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

Is it possible, O my divine Saviour, that the hearts of men should be so hardened against the impressions of compassion?

While your holy mother, St. John, and the few others who had followed you, are overwhelmed with grief at seeing you in this pitiable state, your executioners rejoice, and mock at your torments.

But, my amiable Saviour, I observe something still more shocking, when I see so many miserable sinners, who make it the subject of their amusement and pleasure to renew incessantly the fatal cause of all your sufferings. Alas ! how many christians do we observe of this description, who are hardened in sin, and insensible to all your graces. Though sunk in vice and iniquity, we see them following their diversions, and indulging in vain joys, while they insolently ridicule your true disciples, who are attached to the cross. Permit me not, divine Jesus, ever to fall into such deplorable blindness.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

If thou desirest not to be of the number of these unhappy wretches, imprint deeply on thy heart these words of the gospel : *Blessed are they who weep, who suffer persecution, who are crucified with Jesus ;* for they shall soon be delivered from their present miseries, to be amply recompensed in the kingdom of heaven.

On the contrary, *Wo to them who laugh now*, who pass their time in pleasures and amusements; for hereafter, they shall weep through the whole length of eternity.

This is the language of our divine Mas'er: dost thou attend to it? Art thou so happy as to relish it, and to reduce it to practice?

The world, which is the great enemy of Jesus Christ, speaks a very different language: it pronounces those unhappy, who weep, who are poor, who are unable to gratify their senses, and to enjoy the ease and pleasures of this life.

The world considers, and treats the disciples of Jesus Christ, as he himself was treated, and as he foretold they also should be treated. "You shall be happy," says he, "when men shall hate you for my sake, and despise you as miserable beings."

Make, therefore, to-day, a strong resolution.

1. To disengage thyself from the pleasures and comforts of the earth, and to nourish a love of mortification and sufferings.
2. To entertain always great sentiments of compassion and tenderness for those who suffer and are afflicted; also to visit them in a spirit of charity, in order to afford them comfort and relief under their necessities.

MEANS.

1. Often and fervently beg of our Lord two great favors, viz. to be detached from earthly pleasures, and to have a feeling commiseration for the sufferings of your neighbour.

2. Often to think on the poverty and sufferings of Jesus Christ and his saints.

3. By way of contrast, compare the riches of

the earth with the riches of heaven; remembering that the life of man is of short duration.

4. Represent to yourself the surprise and dreadful astonishment which will overwhelm the rich and great ones of the world at the hour of death, when they shall see themselves in a moment stript of all the goods and honors to which they are now so inordinately attached.

TWENTY-SEVENTH MEDITATION.

Jesus has vinegar and gall given him to drink.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

IN consequence of the excess and duration of my torments, I experience a great thirst, and I make it known by that word, *Sitio, I thirst*. My executioners hence take occasion to encrease my sufferings, by giving me gall and vinegar to drink.

I am made a complete victim of expiation for your sins: my eyes, by beholding my own blood—my ears, by hearing so many blasphemies—my whole body, by the various wounds inflicted on it, had atoned for the sins committed by the sight, by the hearing, and by the feeling: my tongue and palate also are now to be punished also for the many crimes of men, committed by the mouth and the gratification of sensuality.

Yes, it is to make satisfaction for all the sins of gluttony, detraction, oaths, and blasphemies, that I am now drenched with gall and vinegar.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

Is it possible, my amiable Saviour, that your sacred tongue, that your divine mouth, which had pronounced so many oracles, and dispensed

so many graces and benedictions in our favor, should be thus embittered with gall and vinegar at the time of your death ? O astonishing scene !

But why must so many unhappy christians still renew the cause of this punishment ? Why must they allow their diabolical tongues to blaspheme your sacred name, and to pour out falsehood, detraction and calumny ? Why must they make a God of their belly, by seeking after delicate meats, and studying only to gratify their sensual appetite ! Alas ! my divine Master, in saying this, do I not pronounce sentence against myself ? Am I not unfortunately one of this unhappy number ?

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Where is the person, says the wise man, who does not sin by the tongue ? Its vices are detraction, injuries, oaths, vain and deceitful words. Hast thou not been guilty of some of these faults ?

Repent, and say now with David, but let it be from the bottom of thy heart : “ O my God, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, rather than be employed in offending thee.”

Carefully avoid the company of detractors, swearers, and of all those who make an improper use of their tongue : thus only canst thou expect to preserve thy own tongue from sin.

From the bitter portion of gall and vinegar, ministered to Christ in his passion, seek a remedy against intemperance. If thou desirest to feast with Christ in the kingdom of his Father, suffer not thy heart to be attached to luxurious dainties, and precious wines. Be thankful for

the good things of God, which thou enjoyest, and of which Christ was destitute; but be not dissolved in carnal delights, *nor make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

Labor, by sobriety and mortification, to overcome all excess: learn to take only what things are necessary or proper for thy food, and to be content even with moderate or mean diet. Rather *hunger* after justice, and *labor for the food which perisheth not, but endureth to life everlasting.*

Say with the wise man: I can easily prepare my mind, and form good resolutions, never more to offend thee, my good God; but thou alone canst enable me to govern my tongue, and restrain my sensual appetite.

This is what thou shouldst often beg of God, that thou mayest keep thy present resolution of avoiding all intemperance, and of employing thy mouth and tongue in praising and blessing thy Lord. For the same purpose, make use of the following means.

MEANS.

1. Frequently to examine into the sins committed by the taste and the tongue.

2. In conversation, to bear in mind the silence of Jesus in his passion, and at the time of repast, to remember the gall and vinegar which he drank in expiation of thy intemperance.

3. To accustom ourselves, when alone, to pious ejaculations, and to pronounce certain devout and affectionate words; as for instance: *Live, Jesus: come, my dear Jesus, and take full possession of my soul, &c.* But be careful to say these words with great love and respect.

By way of comfort to Jesus Christ under his excessive sufferings, make him an offering of the love, complacency, felicity, delight, and all the beatitude which he took from eternity, and still continues to take as the Eternal Word in the bosom of his Father who begets him, and in union of the adorable persons of the most blessed Trinity. In return for the excruciating torments which he endured, beg him to accept this reciprocal love, this ineffable joy, resulting from the contemplation of the infinite perfections and attributes which constitute the essence of the Divinity. This will also be a proper tribute of thanks and gratitude for the favors received in the creation, redemption, and sanctification of mankind, &c.

TWENTY-EIGHTH MEDITATION.

Jesus is forsaken by his Father.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

I AM now arrived at the extremity of my sufferings ; my executioners have exhausted their malice ; their cruelty is satisfied ; and the earth is unable to add to my torments. But the rigor of my Father's justice still pursues me, and, by depriving me of his divine consolations, makes me experience a new abyss of sadness.

My Father has forsaken me and left me in the hands of men, more cruel than the very lions, and who load me with every species of insult and torment.

If you ask me why I am reduced to this desolate condition, be assured that your sins are the cause of it, and that by them you have deserved similar punishment.

Because you abandoned my Father, and by sin have separated yourselves from him, therefore am I now abandoned and forsaken by him.

In order that he may not abandon you to the torments of hell, and of a miserable eternity, I submit to this dereliction, in addition to the other torments of my passion.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O my divine Saviour, I now clearly perceive what a dreadful evil sin is, since, on its account, your father leaves you, his beloved Son, the object of his greatest complacency, in the midst of all your pains and sorrows.

How much am I to blame, my amiable Master, when I complain of being forsaken by men, and murmur at the afflictions, and deprived of all consolation. I abandon my heart to you, my amiable Father; do with it as you please.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Learn here, that to be forsaken in thy troubles, and deprived for a time of such sensible consolations as might lessen their rigor, is frequently highly advantageous to the soul. It is thus Jesus Christ and all his saints have been treated.

By trials of this kind, God usually purifies the souls of his servants from the stains of sin, and draws them more powerfully to himself.

Be not, therefore so apprehensive of experiencing temporary derelictions of this sort; but dread, above all things, to be forsaken by God for eternity.

Remember, that if thou abandon God by one mortal sin, he may, perhaps, abandon thee for ever.

Firmly resolve, therefore, under all trials and afflictions, humbly to submit thyself to the will

of God ; and not eagerly to seek after the consolations of this life. 2. Choose to be stripped of all friends, and forsaken by all creatures, rather than forsake God by one mortal sin.

1. To be convinced, that sufferings, devoid of consolation, serve wonderfully to purify the soul from imperfections, and to advance her in a short time, in the way of solid virtue and perfection. This means God has always employed to perfect his greatest servants.

2. To consider, that the consolations which, in the time of affliction, we so ardently desire, may perhaps only serve to diminish our merit, by diminishing our pains.

3. To be well assured, that God is oftentimes the nearest to support and comfort those who are the most abandoned by men.

If, therefore, thou art troubled in body, or wearied and faint in mind ; if thou art despised in the world, and hast lost the favor of men, because thou followest the thing that is good, or adherest to the gospel of Christ ; if thou art buried, as it were, in obscurity, or thy reputation be overcast with foul slander, be not disturbed, but have immediate recourse to Jesus, despised on the cross by men, and forsaken by his heavenly Father. Consider well his desolate situation, and study, in thy abandonment, to shew thyself meek after his example, and ever resigned to the will of his heavenly Father.

TWENTY-NINTH MEDITATION.

Jesus dying on the Cross.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

ALL you who, moved by faith and love, visit the different stations of my passion, stop and

consider, if there be any sorrow that can be compared with mine.

Contemplate my head crowned with thorns, and unable to find any resting place under its langor and pressure ; contemplate my hands and feet, pierced with nails ; my body all torn, and covered with blood ; and from the violence of these different pains, you may infer what must be the excess of those I have to suffer in my agony. If the moment of death be so painful to persons of every description—that moment which so violently rends man in two, by dividing two parts that have been closely united ; judge what I must feel on this occasion, since I die in the midst of such excruciating torments.

Represent to yourself all the torments of the martyrs, and whatever cruelties the malice of tyrants, and savage barbarity of the executioners, could inflict upon them ; and be assured that all this will only furnish a very imperfect idea of my sufferings.

To understand the excess of these, it would be necessary to dive into the bottom of my soul, and to discover what passes there in the secret of my heart.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O my divine Saviour, if it be impossible for any person of the least humanity to behold, without pity and sorrow, even the most infamous criminal expiring on a gibbet, what ought to be the sentiments of my heart, in beholding you my Father, my King, and my God, in the midst of such unparalleled torments ; dying for me on a disgraceful cross.

I see, divine Saviour, your cross surrounded by different persons : on one side, I behold your

holy mother, your beloved disciple, and some few others, who know and love you ; these I see all penetrated with the most lively sorrow : but, though unable to preserve that dear life which is thus violently torn from you, they are careful at least to preserve that precious and divine life of grace, which you possess in their hearts.

At the same time, I see the soldiers, the executioners, and the blind multitude, acting a very different part. After causing you, like an infamous malefactor, to die on the cross, they miserably refuse to admit you into their hearts ; nor will they suffer you to recover that spiritual life in their souls, which they have unhappily forfeited by their sins.

The sun is darkened, the rocks are split, the graves are opened, the dead arise ; but the hearts of these unhappy miscreants, harder than the very rocks, remain insensible and unmoved.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

The world is full of these hard and stony hearts, which obstinately resist every motion of grace, and, with equal contempt, slight every means which God employs to draw them to himself. The insensible elements were moved and convulsed at his death, and yet the hearts of the sons of men remained untouched. Art thou of his number ? Dost thou faithfully correspond with the inspirations of God ? Dost thou make a proper use of the death of thy amiable Saviour ?

Is he still living in thy heart by grace ? and dost thou charitably endeavor to procure the same happiness for others ? This is the characteristic of holy souls, to labor as much as possible, that Christ may live in the hearts of all.

Jesus expires amidst the greatest torments, out of love for thee : art not thou sensibly moved at such a sight ? Canst thou refuse to live for Jesus, who has not refused to die for thee ?— Oh ! employ the remainder of thy life for his honor and glory, and in preparing thyself for a happy death. Such ought to be thy resolution. Behold here the proper means for reducing it to practice.

MEANS.

1. If we desire to die on the cross with Jesus, that is, to die like true christians, we must live like true christians, who are crucified with Jesus. Every true christian ought to say with the apostle : *With Christ I am nailed to the cross*, by the faithful observance of his commandments.

2. Often to reflect, that we die daily, because every day we lose a part of our temporal and terrestrial life ; but happy should we be, did we, every day, interiorly die to ourselves, and to the world, by disengaging our hearts from creatures, that we may live only for God.

3. Often beg fervently of our Lord, that we may thus die in a spiritual manner ; and, for this end, labor to mortify our senses.

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus, by that bitterness thou sufferedst for me on the cross, chiefly when thy blessed soul departed from thy body, have mercy on my soul now, and at its departure from this world, that it may be admitted to life everlasting. Amen.

THIRTIETH MEDITATION.*Jesus is pierced with a Lance.***JESUS TO THE SOUL.**

ALL is consummated on my part : I have given my blood, my life, my body, all that I had.

Nevertheless, the cruelty of my executioners is not exhausted ; they pursue me after my death ; they open my side, to take what little blood remains in me, and to tread it under foot.

All is consummated ; now is the justice of my Father satisfied ; his wrath is appeased ; men are ransomed ; but only at the price of my blood.

Come, my dear children, and collect the blood which I shed after my death ; it remains with you to apply it to your souls, without this application it will not avail you ; something will still be wanting to my passion.

Hasten then, by faith, to apply yourself to this side, now opened to you by a spear : enter, and dwell there, by a devout participation of the holy sacraments ; these I have ordained, as means to communicate to you the fruits and merits of my blood.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O my divine Saviour, let your adorable blood be poured on us, since by this alone we can be saved.

In your sacred side I will establish my abode and rest for ever. Happy they who make it their asylum ; who seek no other consolation or protection amidst the troubles of this world.

Through this most sacred wound of your side, we are admitted to your sacred heart, the centre of attraction for all the just ; to this centre should

all our hearts be directed. What must be done, divine Jesus, to have the happiness of being inseparably united to you? It seems as if you answered, that I must love you with all my heart; and I must wholly abandon myself to your love; and that I must be perfectly dissengaged from all other things.

Pierce, O my amiable Redeemer, my side and my heart with the divine lance of your holy love. From so salutary a wound, my soul will obtain a perfect *soundness*; so as to admit no lover besides you; nor seek any consolation but from you. May my heart be free and open to you alone, but a stranger to the world; shut against the devil, and strengthened by your protecting grace, against all his temptations. Thus you will abide in me, and I in you; thus you will receive from me all you demand, and I shall possess all that I desire.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

When wilt thou perfectly enjoy so great a happiness? Not till thou offer to thy Saviour an humble and contrite heart, a heart dead to the world, a heart pierced and penetrated with a lively sorrow for my sins.

But alas! it is not easy to enter into these holy dispositions. What then is required of thee for this end? Thou must daily labor to mortify thy unhappy self-love, thy love of earthly things, which hitherto thou hast cherished, by following thy inordinate inclinations and passions.

But what particular means are the most likely to succeed herein? Thou must wholly renounce all criminal pleasures, and often refrain from such as are innocent.

By exercising a holy violence upon thyself, thou must be habituated to self-denials; thou must please thyself in such things as are most opposite to corrupt nature; and be reserved in gratifying even its lawful propensities.

It is thus we insensibly die to the world; it is thus we arrive at the supreme happiness of belonging to Jesus; in such a manner that we may be said to live only in Jesus.

Resolve, therefore, to labor earnestly in this great work; and the better to succeed therein, often reflect on these important truths.

MEANS.

1. That the sovereign happiness of a christian in this life, is to be wholly dead to the world and to ourselves; for then we may truly say with the apostle: *I am crucified with Jesus Christ; I live; no, not I, but Christ liveth in me.*

2. That we cannot attain to this great happiness all at once; the way to it is constantly to persevere in the practice of christian virtues, and resolutely to support the rude combats which the world, the flesh, and the devil, never fail to wage against those who begin in good earnest to labor for salvation.

3. That, however difficult the combat may be, divine grace will render every thing easy to the faithful soul, that truly gives herself to God: and therefore the attacks of our spiritual enemies will only serve to increase our merits, and enhance our crown, by manifesting the sincerity of our love.

O sweet Jesus, to thee do I consecrate my life, my desires, my soul. For me thou wast nailed to the cross; for thee will I give and dedicate myself wholly to thy glory. Amen.

THIRTY-FIRST MEDITATION.

FOR THE LAST DAY IN THE MONTH.

The body of Jesus is laid in the Sepulchre.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

It did not satisfy my love to die naked on the cross: I willingly choose that poverty should accompany me even in the sepulchre; for the sepulchre was not mine; it was only lent me by charity.

Sin was not content to strip me of life; I must, in some sort, be annihilated in the tomb.

Sinners were buried in vice; and, to withdraw them from that abyss, I permit myself to be buried in the sepulchre.

Thus, even after death, I condemn the disorders of your life. In your pride, you formed the design of ascending up to heaven, and I, your Redeemer, permit myself to be enclosed in the bowels of the earth.

Because man had abused all the senses of his body, I suffer my senses to be deprived of all vital functions: I have eyes, but they see not; ears, but they hear not; a mouth, but it speaks not; hands, but they feel not; feet, but they move not. Love alone induces me to consent to this total privation of all things.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

When I behold, O divine Saviour, that one sin alone precipitates the brightest angels from the highest heavens to the deep abyss of hell, I easily conceive from so terrible a fall, the insupportable grievousness of sin, and how much it depresses the creature whom it may seem to elevate. But when I see a God, made man, descending into the sepulchre, because he had charged himself with our crimes, I have a still clearer conviction of the infinite malice of sin.

When, notwithstanding your innocence and sanctity, I behold you in this abode of corruption and annihilation, I am no longer surprised at the saying of one of your prophets : *I was reduced to nothing, and I knew it not.* This he said, when rising from the state of sin, and enlightened by divine grace.

Never suffer me, O Lord, to fall into that woful state of annihilation, to which sin reduces those who are stripped of sanctifying grace.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

O how much does sin degrade us ! Hast thou ever had a right conception of it ? The saints were overwhelmed, and as it were annihilated before God from the lively sense they had of their smallest faults. What ought to be thy humiliation, when thou beholdest the dreadful enormity of thy multiplied sins ?

But when Jesus, who charged himself with thy sins, has demeaned himself to the very centre of the earth, what place canst thou find low enough for thy guilty conscience ?

Descend then, in spirit, into hell, as into the place which is justly due to thy sins ; this place of torments thou canst only escape through the mercy of thy Saviour.

In this manner, the saints, on account of their grievous sins, acknowledged themselves deserving of eternal punishment among the devils and damned souls. Nevertheless, they were not discouraged, or depressed by pusillanimous fears : on the contrary, having a lively faith of what Jesus Christ had merited for them, by his death and resurrection, they were replenished with confidence, and, from his infinite mercy, expected their eternal salvation.

Resolve, therefore, to imitate their profound humility ; and in order to this, never forget that, of thyself, thou hast deserved to suffer the eternal torments of hell.

Do not, however, despond, but animate thyself with the hope, that Jesus will take compassion on thee, and lovingly stretch forth a helping hand to prevent thy falling into this abyss, and to raise thee up to heaven ; provided thou resolve to follow him, and to imitate his virtues. For this purpose, make use of the following means.

MEANS.

1. In the spirit of a true and sincere humility, be willing to bury thyself with Jesus Christ, and in Jesus Christ, by disengaging thyself from the world.

2. Love a hidden life, and make use of thy senses, as if thou were deprived of them, that is, use them without being attached even to the innocent pleasures which they supply.

3. Often seriously think on the low, miserable state to which thou wilt be reduced in the grave ; think on what is to become of thy soul, when separated from the body ; and that it will be either eternally happy with God, or eternally miserable with devils.

THREE ADDITIONAL MEDITATIONS,

To be made occasionally, as being calculated to excite the pious christian to the constant practice of meditation on the Passion of our Lord.

The Passion of Jesus is daily renewed by sinners.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

In rising again from the dead, I ceased to be

subject to pain and to death ; not, however, from any defect of love, or the want of executioners.

An almost infinite number of sinners, as far as lies in them, still continue daily to crucify me ; they make me endure a more cruel and shameful death than what I suffered from the Jews in the days of my mortality.

Yes, there are still to be found disciples base enough to abandon me ; Judases, to betray me ; Herods, to treat me as a fool ; executioners, to renew my torments ; Pilates, to condemn me to death ; impious wretches, to insult and blaspheme me.

These unhappy persons make a new Calvary of their hearts ; the members which they prostitute to iniquity, are the infamous cross to which they fasten me ; and their passions, the cruel nails with which they pierce me.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

Divine Saviour, how terrible is this truth, and yet how little considered ! Were it properly attended to, it would make a deep impression on those who love you ; it would fill them with fear, and inspire them with a holy zeal to labor for the conversion of sinners.

Adorable Jesus, who can conceive the excess of grief which you would necessarily feel at the sight of so many crimes, were you still capable of suffering.

In your present state of glory, this new crucifixion is doubtless more hateful to you, than that which you suffered on Mount Calvary.

If you were nailed to the cross in the time of your mortal life, it was because you chose this death, in conformity with the will of your hea-

venly Father ; and what chiefly afflicted you in the midst of your torments, was the clear view you had of the sins of your tormentors, and of all those who would, one day, tread under foot your precious blood.

But at present, my God, your love cannot consent to a new crucifixion. And, in reality, is it possible that all you have done for us should be ineffectual to divert us from the horrid design of renewing your passion, and of crucifying you in our hearts by wilful sin ?

We tremble with horror at the thought of the heinous crime of your first executioners. It is certain, however, that their guilt was extenuated by their blindness.

They were ignorant of your being the Messiah, and the true God ; for had they known this, they would never have been so abandoned as to commit so execrable a deicide : this your apostle declares. Hence, you solicited your Father to pardon them, and, to move him to mercy, alleged that they knew not what they did.

But when I see you so frequently, and so grievously offended by Christians, who acknowledge you for their God, who adore you as their king, who believe your sacred mysteries, who have for their teachers your apostles, and their successors, whose religion has been confirmed by so many miracles, and by the blood of so many martyrs ; when, notwithstanding all this, they abuse and profane the merits of your death, by their criminal lives, I freely own that they are without excuse ; that their ingratitude is shocking ; and that they justly merit the most dreadful punishments.

Finally, my amiable Saviour, you suffered but

once, and in one place only, an exterior crucifixion; but now you are crucified incessantly, and in all places, by innumerable sinners, who banish you from their hearts.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

O.how ought this terrible truth to fill thee with sorrow, and to inspire thee with an extreme horror for sin!

Canst thou behold thy Jesus, still, daily and hourly crucified anew by thy own brethren—by christians who are his domestics, his friends, his children; without feeling the most lively emotions of sorrow, and without laboring to the utmost of thy power for the conversion of sinners? This is the firm resolution which thou oughtest to adopt.

MEANS.

1. Often to pray fervently for the conversion of sinners.

2. Often to speak to them of the importace of salvation, of death, of the horror of sin, of hell, of heaven, of eternity; but always with great charity and prudence.

3. To reconcile such as are at variance.

4. To reprehend scandalous sinners, and reclaim them to God by good example: finally, whatever may be the defects of others, never suffer yourself to be discouraged, but patiently and meekly bear with them, after the example of Christ and his saints.

MEDITATION.

The triumph of the cross in the hearts of the just.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

WHILST worldlings and sinners insult me by

their crimes, and, as much as lies in them, renew the affronts and dolors of my passion, I have disciples that are faithful to me ; who, full of love and gratitude, seek to establish my reign in their hearts ; and who constantly labor to honor and imitate my sufferings.

My cross they regard as the source of all happiness ; they love it, they esteem it, being willing to suffer any thing for my sake. Are you in these happy dispositions ?

To render themselves conformable to me, is their chief delight. With this view, they pray, they watch, they suffer, they resist their passions and the sentiments of corrupt nature. They generously deprive themselves of the pleasures of this life ; in all undertakings they renounce their own glory to seek after mine ; humiliations and sufferings they esteem as beneficial, and profess the greatest contempt for the honors and riches of the world. Are you penetrated with these holy sentiments ?

The false maxims of the world, which inspire nothing but vanity and pleasure, they resolutely oppose ; they wholly apply themselves to the exercise of mortification ; and have no other ambition but that of being, one day, regarded as true disciples of the cross. What is it you perform to attain to this happiness ?

As the glory which I have prepared for these true followers of the cross, will be proportioned to the measure of their sufferings, so are they fully persuaded, that whatever they can suffer in this world, is not worthy to be compared with the greatness of that recompense which they expect.

So powerfully are they animated to suffer for

my love, by the great truths which they learn in meditating on my passion, that instead of avoiding, they joyfully meet and seek after the occasions of suffering for my sake.

They are ever ready to pardon and embrace their persecutors ; considering them either as the ministers of my justice, or as the instruments which I employ for the trial of their fidelity and love.

Amidst all their pains and troubles, they enjoy a solid and profound peace of mind, such as worldlings can neither relish nor conceive ; and, if they sometimes appear troubled, and seem to feel a certain degree of disquietude, it proceeds from the fear they have of not being sufficiently attached to my service.

Such is the portrait of those who lovingly plant my cross in the midst of their hearts. In hearts of this description, I take complacency : in these I live, and truly reign : in these I find nothing to resist my will ; they are ever disposed to follow my inspirations, and to love me without interruption.

Do you desire to be one of this number ? Do you wish to arrive at this happiness ? Think often on my sufferings : assiduously meditate on my passion ; and faithfully apply yourself, every day of your life, to imitate the examples which I have given you.

THE SOUL TO JESUS.

O my amiable Saviour, I am fully sensible, that by the cross you have triumphed over your enemies ; and that, by this same cross, you still triumph daily in the hearts of the just.

It is owing to the love they entertain for your sufferings, and to their ardent zeal in following

you in your sacred passion, that they incessantly crucify the terrestrial and carnal man, and faithfully obey all the motions of the new and spiritual man.

You, O Jesus, are the new man, and, by love, you reign in the hearts of the just. You make them also to reign with you, by enabling them to rule and overcome their passions.

Alas! shall I never be so happy as thus to reign with you? Shall I always remain the slave of my unbridled passions? Shall I always be engaged in the servitude of the world? Shall I never entirely subdue the corrupt inclinations of flesh and blood, to obey only your divine inspirations?

O my amiable Redeemer, how far am I removed from the holy dispositions of those happy souls who rejoice in sufferings; who despise the honors and pleasures of this life; who renounce the maxims of the world; who think only how to please you, and to live for you.

What shall I do to partake of their happiness? From what source do they derive so many graces? Most assuredly, it is from meditating on your sufferings that they are enriched with all these virtues. The view of your poverty strips them of all attachment to riches; the view of your patience and meekness checks all the complaints naturally arising from corrupt nature, and the excess of their pains; the view of your humility, and of the affronts you endured in your passion, inspires them with sentiments of the most profound humiliation; the view of your torments makes them despise earthly pleasures; finally, the consideration of your prodigious, wonderful love, manifested in every part of your sacred

passion, disposes them to undertake every thing, however painful, in order that your cross may triumph in their hearts.

Give me grace, divine Saviour, to apply daily to this sacred source, and, by a serious and affectionate meditation on your sufferings, to plunge myself in this laver of your precious blood.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Art thou not firmly resolved to place thy glory in being of the number of the faithful servants of Jesus crucified, who daily consecrate some portion of time to the meditation of his sufferings? It is thus thou wilt be thoroughly convinced of the great truths of the gospel, and be induced to attend seriously to the work of thy conversion?

If thou art faithful in making use of this means, thou wilt clearly see that thy only solid happiness in this life is to be nailed to the cross with Jesus.

What a happiness, if, at the hour of thy death, thou canst truly say, with the apostle: *I am crucified with Jesus Christ!!* In order to this, make use of the following means.

1. Ardently desire to die to all things, in order to live only in Jesus Christ, and for Jesus Christ. Often beg of him to bestow on you this great mercy.

2. Every day labor to disengage yourself from some favorite object or amusement; and, for the love of Jesus Christ, deprive yourself of its enjoyment.

3. Every day attach yourself more closely to Jesus Christ, by acquitting yourself with greater

fidelity of the spiritual exercises which you may have chosen, or which your director may have prescribed for your advancement in virtue.

4. Often raise up your heart to Jesus crucified, saying first to yourself: *Behold the model thou art to imitate* ; and then to your Lord : *Divine Jesus, when shall I be so happy as to resemble thee ; when shall I become a true disciple of thy cross ?*

MEDITATION.

Jesus on the Cross is unnoticed and unknown.

JESUS TO THE SOUL.

The just man dies and no one regards him, said one of my prophets ; hereby insinuating, that few seriously meditate on the great mystery of my passion.

When I look down from my seat of glory in heaven, and consider the lives of the generality of christians, I may truly affirm, that in their conduct they resemble the Jews and Gentiles : to the former my cross was a subject of scandal, whilst the latter treated it as the greatest folly.

Slothful christians, who are attached solely to their pleasures, refuse to meditate on the bitter sufferings which I endured for them ; they cannot bear even to hear my dolors mentioned, lest they should be obliged to renounce their criminal pursuits, to embrace my poverty, my sorrows, and my cross.

Others permit themselves to be so overwhelmed with the tumultuous cares of this life, that they have neither time nor opportunity to think of me, or of their own salvation : hence, they shamefully forget and neglect both me and their

own immortal souls, to attend solely to the affairs of this miserable life, which is, nevertheless, soon to have an end.

Others, finally, there are, who think sometimes of my passion; but it is with such remissness and inattention, that they derive from it very little fruit; so superficial are the impressions which the sight of my sufferings leaves upon their hearts.

It is my devoted children alone, who seriously think of my cross; who desire to enlist themselves under its standard, and to make it the subject of their assiduous meditation. Only these have the happiness to know me perfectly.

Are not you desirous of being of that number? The matter rests with yourself. You may certainly contrive to spare some little time, every day, from your affairs, in order to meditate on my passion; since, for the love of you, I did not refuse to drink the bitter chalice, even to the very dreg.

THE SOUL TO JESUS,

With confusion and sorrow I confess, O Lord, that I am of the number of those, who through a strange but fatal blindness, seldom think of you, and who seem wholly to forget what you have suffered for our salvation.

But for the future, O my God, I desire to be more faithful in attending to you on the cross. The cross I will consider as your sacred pulpit, from which you deliver the most important lessons of salvation.

It is here, divine master, that we learn what you are, and what we ourselves are: it is here we discover the malice of sin, its ruinous effects,

the price of divine grace, the greatness of heaven, and the rigor of divine justice.

Your cross, my sweet Saviour, is the true school of christians ; it is the mysterious book which contains the whole doctrine of salvation.

The cross is the throne of divine love, the support of the weak, the consolation of the afflicted, the remedy of sinners, and the centre of all holy souls.

THE SOUL TO HERSELF.

Let us then go daily to Mount Calvary, and pass some time in the company of our dear Redeemer ; but let us go with a heart full of love and tenderness, that we may not return without fruit : or, rather let us go there, never to return ; at least, let us leave there our hearts, united to Jesus, and not return without resolving to carry about with us the precious marks of his passion ; which are poverty, humility, mortification, and patience.

If thou art faithful in preserving these marks, that is, in practising all these great truths, after the example which Jesus sets thee on the cross, he will not fail to be formed in thy heart ; it is the most ardent of his desires, and the greatest happiness to which thou canst aspire.

Make, therefore, a strong resolution to employ some time, every day, in thinking on the passion of thy divine Saviour.

LITANY OF THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

(To be recited every Friday after the Meditation.)

LORD have mercy on us; **Christ** have mercy on us; **Lord** have mercy on us.

Christ hear us, **Christ** graciously hear us.

God the Father of heaven, have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.

God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one **God**, have mercy on us.

Jesus the meek king, who didst enter Jerusalem in triumph to go and suffer for us sinners,

Jesus, sold for thirty pieces of silver,

Jesus, who didst humbly stoop to wash thy disciples' feet,

Jesus who, at thy last supper, didst give us thy body and blood to be the spiritual food and nourishment of our souls,

Jesus who, after thy last supper with thy disciples, didst go forth with great zeal and courage to suffer death for us,

Jesus, prostrate in prayer in the garden of olives,

Jesus, sad and sorrowful even unto death,

Jesus, who in thy agony wast covered with a bloody sweat,

Jesus, who didst condescend to be comforted by an angel,

Jesus, basely betrayed by Judas with a kiss,

Jesus, apprehended and bound by the Jews, like a criminal,

Have mercy on us.

Jesus, abandoned by all thy disciples,
 Jesus, carried before Annas and Caiphas,
 and falsely accused,

Jesus, thrice denied by Peter, the first of
 thy apostles, whom thou hadst chosen to be
 the visible head of thy church,

Jesus, ignominiously stricken by a servant
 of the high priest,

Jesus, falsely accused by suborned wit-
 nesses,

Jesus, despised and mocked by Herod,

Jesus, clothed in a white garment, and
 despised as a fool,

Jesus, tied to a pillar and cruelly beaten
 with scourges,

Jesus, covered with blood and wounds by
 the scourging of thy sacred body, [ery,

Jesus, clothed in purple, by way of mock-

Jesus, crowned with sharp thorns, which
 pierced thy sacred head,

Jesus, whose face was defiled with phlegm,

Jesus, blindfolded, and mocked by the
 soldiers,

Jesus, buffeted and scornfully abused by
 the Jews,

Jesus, presented to the people in the most
 pitiable state,

Jesus, esteemed worse than Barabbas the
 murderer,

Jesus, torn and bruised all over thy body,

Jesus, demanded by the Jews to be cru-
 cified,

Jesus, acknowledged to be innocent by the
 judge, and yet treated by him as a criminal,

Jesus, condemned by Pontius-Pilate the
 judge.

Have mercy on us.

Jesus, abandoned to the hatred and cruelty of the Jews,

Jesus, loaden with a heavy cross,

Jesus, fainting in the way, unable to bear the weight of thy cross,

Jesus, sensibly affected at meeting thy beloved mother,

Jesus, led to death, like an innocent sheep to the slaughter,

Jesus, stript of thy clothes, when arrived at Mount Calvary,

Jesus, inhumanly nailed to the hard wood of the Cross, [quitties,

Jesus, all covered with wounds for our ini-

Jesus, elevated on the cross, and raised up in the air with a shock which occasioned thee incredible pain,

Jesus, full of goodness, who didst compassionately pray for thy enemies,

Jesus, numbered with the wicked, and crucified between two thieves,

Jesus, treated as the outcast and reproach of men,

Jesus, exposed to the insults and execrations of the passengers,

Jesus, derided by the Jews,

Jesus, who didst patiently submit to the scoffs and insolence of the soldiers,

Jesus, reproached by one of the thieves that was crucified with thee,

Jesus, scorned, despised, and without honor in the sight of men,

Jesus, most merciful, who didst promise Paradise to the good thief, the moment he believed in thee, and repented of his crimes.

K

Have mercy on us.

Jesus, who, in thy extreme thirst, hadst only vinegar and gall to drink,

Jesus, abandoned by thy Father, and deprived of consolation,

Jesus, who from a motive of filial tenderness, didst commend thy dear mother to the care of St. John,

Jesus, who didst commend thy spirit into the hands of thy Father,

Jesus, dying and expiring in the arms of the cross,

[*Pause here for a moment, and annihilate yourself before a God who dies for you.*]

Jesus, obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,

Jesus, whose side after thy death was pierced with a lance,

Jesus, from whose side issued water and blood,

Jesus, by whose blood and stripes we have been healed,

Jesus, taken down from the cross,

Jesus wrapped in fine linen,

Jesus, buried in a new sepulchre,

Jesus, who after death didst descend into hell, to free the holy Fathers that were there,

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,

Spare us ! O Lord,

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,

Hear us ! O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,

Have mercy on us.

Jesus hear us.

Have mercy on us.

Jesus graciously hear us.

V. Our Lord Jesus Christ humbled himself.

R. Being made obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

LET US PRAY.

O Lamb without spot! O most holy victim! whose blood hath cancelled the sins of the world, blot out mine, I beseech thee, and never permit me to lose the benefit of thy sufferings. Amen.

O Jesus, abandoned and forsaken by every body: Jesus, sad and sorrowful: Jesus, patient and resigned to death, help me to bear with equal resignation all the afflictions thou art pleased to send me in this life. Amen.

O Jesus, calumniated, despised, and outrageously insulted! teach me to despise the vain judgments of men, and patiently to suffer the blackest calumnies. Amen.

O Jesus, torn with stripes, pierced with thorns, and covered with blood for love of me! teach me to endure, for thy love, the pains and inconveniences of sickness and ill health. Amen.

O Jesus, delivered up to the executioners, and condemned to the ignominious death of the cross! enable me to fly all vain-glory, and to love the most humble situations. Amen.

O Jesus, bending beneath the heavy load of the cross! unite my cross to thine, and enable me to bear it with the like resignation and meekness. Amen.

O Jesus, elevated on the cross for my sake! raise up my affections to heavenly desires, and let me no longer live but for thee, that being crucified with thee, I may be wholly occupied in loving and pleasing thee alone. Amen.

A PRAYER TO GOD THE FATHER.

O my God, being fully sensible how deficient I am in the practice of good works, and how unable of myself to make any satisfaction to thy divine justice, I most willingly offer thee the price of my redemption, and the payment which Jesus Christ my Saviour has made for me on the cross.

Behold, O Father of Mercies, the tears and the blood which he shed for my sins, and forgive the hardness of my impenitent heart. Amen.

I have often disobeyed thy holy commandments, and the precepts of thy holy church; but pardon me, I beseech thee, for the sake of that humble submission which my Saviour shewed in being obedient even to the death of the cross. Amen.

For the sake of the humility of thy beloved Son, pardon my pride and self-complacency. Amen.

For the sake of his extreme poverty, and voluntary privation of all things, forgive my inordinate love of riches and attachment to creatures. Amen.

For the sake of this virginal flesh, bruised and torn by the rigorous torments he endured, forgive all my past impurities, both interior and exterior. Amen.

For the sake of that ardent love with which he died on the cross for us sinners, pardon me whatever offences I have been guilty of against my neighbour, by envy, or any sort of uncharitableness. Amen.

For the sake of that hunger and thirst which thy dear Son suffered during life, and particu-

larly on the cross, forgive me all my past sins of intemperance and gluttony. Amen.

For the sake of that amiable meekness, which ever distinguished this immaculate Lamb of God, forgive me all the motions of anger, impatience, and resentment. Amen.

For the sake of that zeal and fervor with which Christ always labored for thy honor and glory, and the good of souls, pardon me all the sins I have committed by sloth, negligence, and tepidity. Amen.

For the sake of that affectionate remembrance, which, during the course of his mortal life, he always had of thee, my God, pardon me all the useless and distracting thoughts that have too much occupied my mind. Amen.

For the sake of his pious and edifying conversation among men, forgive me whatever sins I have committed by vain, idle, and unprofitable discourse. Amen.

For the sake of his ever holy conduct, and the great purity of his intention, forgive me all the sinful and imperfect actions of my life. Amen.

For the sake of his sacred members nailed to the cross, and of the holy use he constantly made of his senses, pardon me the ill use I have made of my bodily members, and of my interior and exterior faculties. Amen.

Finally, O Almighty God, for the sake of the innocence and sanctity of thy beloved Son, and of all his virtues and sufferings, pardon me all my sins, both known and unknown. Amen.

Such, O my God, is the satisfaction which I now offer, and which my Saviour himself has made for me ; receive, therefore, I beseech thee, in this infinite treasure of his merits as the dis-

charge of all my debts, and for the sake of the plentiful redemption he purchased for me by his precious blood, bring me to everlasting life. Amen.

The following Prayers may be said on Fridays, or other Days, according to each one's Devotion.

OPEN, O Lord, my mouth to bless your holy name, cleanse my heart from all vain and distracting thoughts, enlighten my understanding, inflame my will, that I may worthily perform this holy exercise with attention and devotion, and may deserve to be heard in the presence of your divine Majesty, who, with the heavenly Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

AN ACT OF CONTRITION.

My dear Lord Jesus Christ, Redeemer of the World ! behold prostrate at your feet a most wretched and ungrateful sinner. Yes, my God, I have offended you most grievously, in thoughts, words, and deeds. My heinous crimes fixed to you the bloody cross. To rescue me from eternal damnation, you agonized three hours on mount Calvary. But oh ! how much am I now displeased with myself ! How much do I grieve for having offended you, a God of infinite goodness, of infinite charity ! I stand astonished and confounded at your incomprehensible patience, in supporting such a provoking wretch. From the bottom of my heart, I detest my sins : and because I now love you, and will love you above all things, I steadfastly purpose, by your holy grace, never more to offend you for the time to

come, but rather to die a thousand deaths than commit one mortal sin. Amen.

STATIONS OF THE PASSION.

O most sweet Jesus ! praying to the Father in the garden, sorrowful even to death, and sweating in the agony of grief, Have mercy on us.

Resp. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

O most sweet Jesus ! delivered by the traitor's kiss into the hands of your enemies, seized and bound like a thief, and abandoned by your disciples, Have mercy on us.

Resp. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

O most sweet Jesus ! by the unjust verdict of the Jews found guilty of death, brought like a malefactor before the tribunal of Pilate, scorned and derided by impious Herod, Have mercy on us.

Resp. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

O most sweet Jesus ! stripped of your garments, and most inhumanly scourged at the pillar, Have mercy on us.

Resp. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

O most sweet Jesus ! crowned with thorns, blindfolded, buffeted, struck with a reed, clothed in derision with a purple garment, and infinite other ways scorned and reviled, Have mercy on us.

Resp. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

O most sweet Jesus! reputed more criminal than Barabbas the murderer, rejected by the Jews, and condemned to the ignominious death of the cross, Have mercy on us.

Resp. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

O most sweet Jesus! laden with a heavy cross, and led like an innocent lamb to the place of execution, Have mercy on us.

Resp. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

O most sweet Jesus! hanging between two thieves, derided, blasphemed, made to taste vinegar and gall, and enduring most horrible torments from the sixth to the ninth hour, Have mercy on us.

Resp. Have mercy on us, O Lord have mercy on us.

O most sweet Jesus! dead upon the cross, and wounded in your side with a spear in your holy mother's presence, whence issued forth water and blood, Have mercy on us.

Resp. Have mercy on us, O Lord have mercy, on us.

O most sweet Jesus! taken down from the cross, and bathed with the tears of your most sorrowful mother, Have mercy on us.

Resp. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

O most sweet Jesus! torn and bruised all over your body, bearing the sacred marks of your five most precious wounds, embalmed with spices, and laid in the sepulchre, Have mercy on us.

Resp. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

Vers. He truly bore our sorrows.

Resp. And he carried our grief.

LET US PRAY.

O God, who for the redemption of the world, vouchsafedst to be born, to be circumcised, to be rejected by the Jews, betrayed with a kiss, to be bound like a malefactor, and, like an innocent lamb, to be led to slaughter, to be ignominiously brought before Annas and Caiphas, Pilate and Herod, to be accused by false witnesses, scourged with whips, buffeted, defiled with spittle, crowned with thorns, stripped of thy clothes, fastened to the cross, placed between two thieves, to have vinegar and gall given thee to drink, to have thy side pierced with a lance; by all these most grievous pains of thy death and passion, I beseech thee O merciful Jesus, to deliver me from the pains of hell, and to conduct me whither thy mercy did conduct the good thief, crucified with thee: who, together, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

STABAT MATER DOLOROSA,

As corrected by the Rev. HENRY YOUNG.

[*Let us condole with the immaculate Virgin, Mother of God, pierced with the Sword of Grief at the Foot of the Cross.*]

BENEATH the world's redeeming rood,
The most afflicted mother stood,
Immers'd in grief for her Son's blood.

As that stream'd down from ev'ry part,
Of all his wounds she felt the smart;
What pierc'd his body pierc'd her heart.

How sad and how afflicted is
The blessed Mary, while she sees
Her Son, her God, in sacrifice.
The pious Mother grieves and sighs,
Great floods of tears stream from her eyes,
Whilst on the cross her Jesus dies.
Who can with tearless eyes look on
The bleeding wounds of such a Son,
For whom the Mother does bemoan.
O worse than Jewish heart, that should,
Unmov'd, behold the double flood
Of Mary's tears, and Jesus' blood.
She sees her Jesus for our crimes,
She sees him scourg'd a thousand times ;
A thorny crown his head confines.
The loving Son before her eyes,
Ascends the cross on which he lies :
For us he bleeds, for us he dies.
Ah pious Mother ! teach my heart
Of sighs and tears the holy art ;
And in thy grief to bear a part.
Of all great gifts I ask this one,
To love my Jesus, thy dear Son,
Whose bleeding wounds my heart have won.
O holy Mother, Virgin blest,
Imprint these wounds on my cold breast :
In them I'll sleep and take my rest.
Oh, may the wounds of thy dear Son,
Our contrite heart possess alone,
And all terrene affections drown.
O Virgin, now this favor give,
That I with Jesus Christ may grieve,
For length of days that I will live.
Beneath the cross with thee I'll stand,
And will unite in one strict band,
Whilst grief and love my heart expand.
O Virgin blest, renown'd in fame,
Let not my suit be now in vain,
Take me a mourner in thy train.

Of Jesus' death I will partake,
And I shall suffer for his sake ;
Some marks on me his wounds will make.

Vouchsafe to wound me with his spear,
Christ's cross I love to bear,
And with his gore I will appear.

From hell's dire flames thy client save,
O Virgin pure, this grace I crave :
On Judgment-day my soul receive.

O Jesus Christ, I humbly pray,
That thou wilt save me on that day :
Let Mary intercede for me.

When death will close my eyes to rest,
O Christ, attend to her request,
And number me among the blest. *Amen.*

Vers. The sword of grief has pierced thy soul.

Resp. 'That out of many hearts, cogitations may be revealed.

LET US PRAY.

We beseech thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, that the blessed Virgin Mary, thy Mother, may intercede for us with thy clemency, both now and at the hour of our death, who, at hour of thy passion, had her most holy soul pierced through with the sword of sorrow : who livest and reignest, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Short Prayers of St. Gregory on our Lord's Passion.

1. O Lord Jesus Christ, I adore thee hanging on the cross, and wearing a crown of thorns. I humbly pray thee, that thy blood may deliver me from the destroying angel. *Amen.* Then say, *Our Father, &c. Hail Mary, &c.*

2. O Lord Jesus Christ, I adore thee wounded on the cross, and having gall and vinegar given thee to drink. I beseech thee, that thy wounds may become the cure of my soul. *Amen. Our Father, &c.*

3. O Lord Jesus Christ, I beseech thee, through the bitterness of the pains which thou didst suffer in the hour of death, and chiefly when thy most holy soul parted from thy

blessed body ; have mercy on my soul at its departure, and bring it to eternal life. Amen. *Our Father, &c.*

4. O Lord Jesus Christ, I adore thee laid in the sepulchre, and embalmed with myrrh and spices ; grant, I beseech thee, that thy death may be my life. Amen. *Our Father, &c.*

5. O Lord Jesus Christ, I adore thee descending into hell, and delivering from thence thy captives : never permit, I beseech thee, my soul to go thither. Amen. *Our Father, &c.*

6. O Lord Jesus Christ, I adore thee rising from the dead, and ascending into heaven, and sitting at the right hand of thy Father ; grant, I beseech thee, that I may follow thee thither, and deserve to be presented to him by thee. Amen. *Our Father, &c.*

7. O Lord Jesus Christ, who art the good Shepherd, preserve the just, justify sinners, have mercy on all the faithful, and be propitious to me, a miserable and unworthy sinner. Amen. *Our Father, &c. Hail Mary, &c.*

A Prayer, wherein we offer to God the Passion of his Son.

Behold, O holy Father ! thy dearly beloved Son, so cruelly tormented for my sake. Behold, most merciful King ! who it is that suffers. Is it not, O Lord ! thy most innocent Son, whom thou hast delivered unto death, that he might redeem thy servants ? Is it not the Author of Life, who is led as a sheep to the slaughter, and is made obedient unto death, even the death of the cross ? All our hope is in that plentiful redemption which he has purchased for us. He prays for us, he weeps for us, his soul is sorrowful even to death for us ; he is in a most grievous agony and incomprehensible desolation for us ; finally, he dies for us. Receive, O Father of Mercy, this his divine sacrifice : he is our pledge, our ransom, our Mediator ; he is the immaculate Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world ; it is his sacred blood that we offer you, and which he shed for us. Bestow upon us, then, O eternal Father ! your grace for his sake, and through his death give us eternal life. Amen.



THE END.

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